Salt

May 2016

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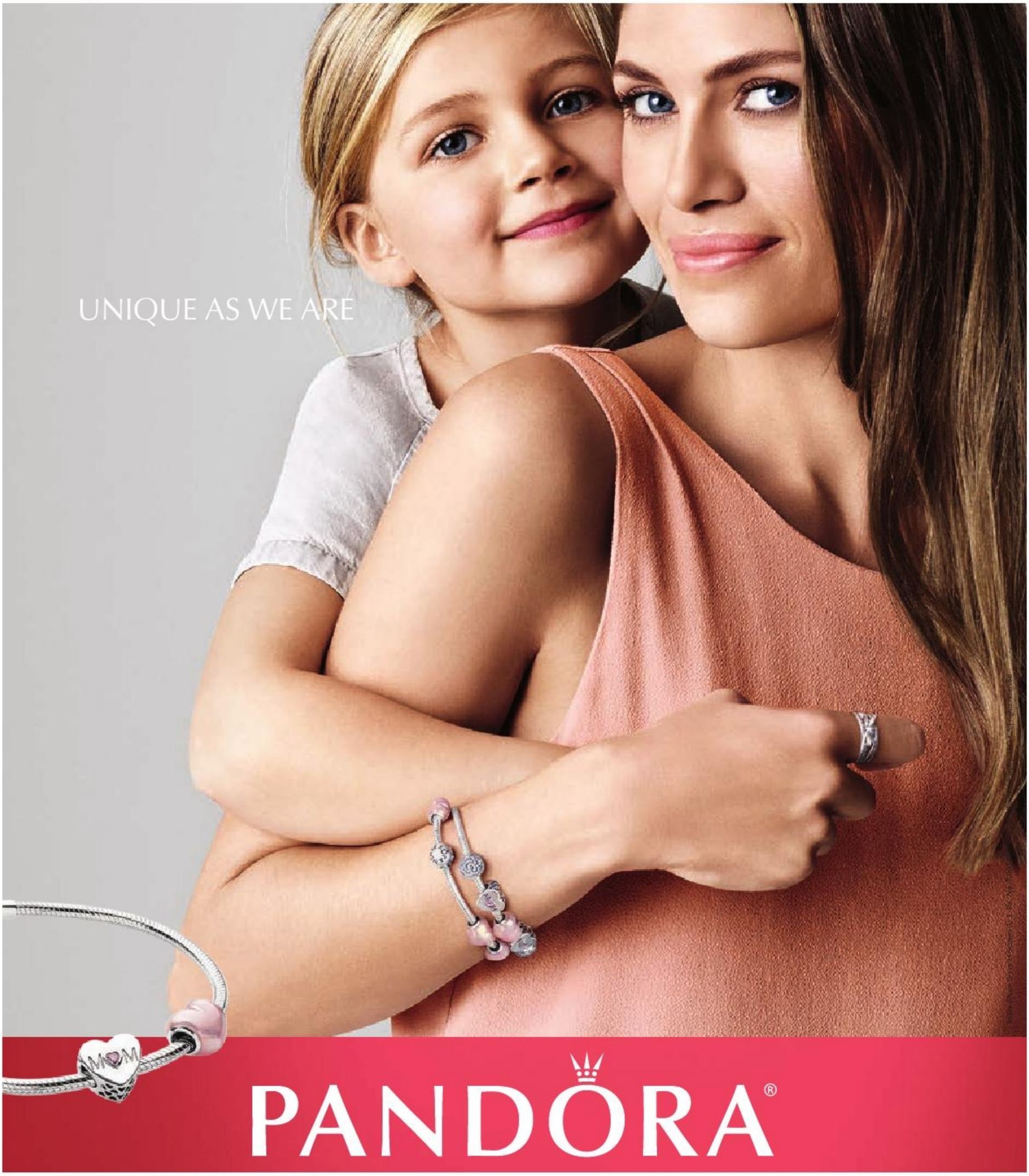

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Reduced

2525 Canterbury Road — *Oleander Estates*

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Reduced

1542 Magnolia Place — *Magnolia Place/Oleander*

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Intense pain limited Sally's ability to enjoy life to the fullest. She had both knees replaced, and got her spunk back in the bargain.

An avid shopper, traveler and gardener who loves to entertain, Sally could no longer do the activities that brought her joy. After two surgeries at NHRMC Orthopedic Hospital and follow-up physical therapy, Sally reports that she is "good to go." And she has several trips planned to prove it.

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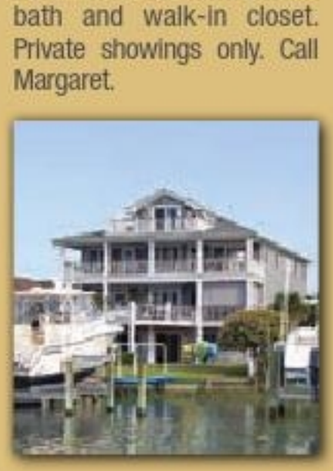
42 Pelican Dr., Wrightsville Beach **$3,950,000**



This property sits on a large soundfront lot, landscaped for privacy and security. Private dock can accommodate 4 boats. Inviting chef's kitchen, open to waterfront dining and living areas. 5 bedrooms, each with their own private bath and walk-in closet. Private showings only. Call Margaret.

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A Gardener's Blessing

By Jim Dodson

It's raining this morning, a Sunday in April.

Few things, meteorologically speaking, make me happier.

Sunday is my favorite day, soft rain a gardener's blessing. Together, rainy Sundays make the world a smaller, quieter place, encouraging some hard-working folks — my beautiful wife, let's say — to burrow a bit longer under covers before she's roused by the muddy-pawed dogs to mount one of her famous Sabbathday breakfasts, with time allowed for good behavior to read the morning paper front to back, to talk of small things and savor a peace that passeth weekday understanding.

For me, rainy Sundays stir involuntary memories, much the way an oven-warm madeleine did the poet Proust.

The steady drip of my very green terrace garden reminds me of solitary days of childhood living in a succession of the small sleepy Southern towns where my father worked at the newspaper and my brother and I were pretty much left to roam the surrounding world untethered. We were rarely inside the house, boxcar children growing wild.

First there was Gulfport, where my mother and I would walk the broad flat beach in the evening collecting interesting shells and looking out for approaching storms over the vast Gulf of Mexico, a body of water that was often as still as bathwater but reportedly coughed up more diverse kinds of shells than any other ocean. A mountainous press foreman named Tiny Earl, who worked at the small newspaper my father owned with a silent partner, informed me that we lived in "Hurricane Alley" and predicted that any day now a "killer" hurricane could churn up out of the Gulf to wreak incredible devastation.

I was thrilled at this prospect and soon wrote off to the National Geographic Society for an official Hurricane Watch kit that included a special map of hurricane patterns and a preparation guide, plus membership card and a pair of special yellow binoculars bearing the logo of the NGS.

A few impressive storms did boil out of the Gulf during the three years we lived across the street from the state beach, bringing curtains of rain and wind and lightning but disappointingly no named hurricanes that I could later declare that I not only witnessed but somehow survived. That distinction would come half a century later when Hurricane Katrina wiped away that whole section of the coast and probably our old house with it.

Still, my earliest memory of life save for those evening shell hunts with my pregnant mother was the sound of quiet Sunday morning rain dripping from the eaves of our house as I sat in a cardboard moving box on its broad front porch leafing through illustrated adventure books I could almost read.

My mother lost her baby the same week my father lost his newspaper owing to a partner who favored fancy linen suits and cleaned out the paper's bank accounts before running off to Mexico or Cuba after his Kiwanis luncheon with the shapely cigarette girl from a downtown hotel.

We wound up for eighteen months living by Greenfield Lake in Wilmington, where the weather either seemed blazingly hot and sunny or moodily cool and rainy. I learned to swim in the little lagoon by the bridge to Wrightsville Beach on a rainy Sunday after church, dog paddling about while a sudden shower freckled the still surface of the water. I also learned to ride a bicycle that year, 1958, pedaling shakily along the oyster-shelled foot paths of Airlie Gardens and the paved sidewalks around Greenfield Lake, my tires singing on the wet pavement.

After my mother's second miscarriage, we spent a strangely wonderful year living in Florence, South Carolina, where my father worked at the newspaper and my mother was nursed back to health by a kind and wonderful black woman named Jesse May Richardson, who looked after my brother and me during the week and always checked in on us after her own church services on Sunday.

Jesse May taught my mother about garden plants and how to cook "real" Southern food, and me to feet dance by lifting me up by my skinny white-boy arms and lowering me onto her own sensible shoes, shimmying us around the floor while dinner cooked on the stove and gospel music played from her transistor radio sitting in the kitchen window. It was Miss Jesse May who first informed me that rain is holy, the Lord's way of making the world grow and prosper, so never complain about a rainy day, one of many things she told me — often quite bossily at times — including that no civilized child ever removes his shoes in a public place, certainly not a grocery store, no matter how hot the day outside happens to be or how cool the tiled floor underfoot.

It rained the Sunday we went to see Miss Jesse May in the colored wing of the Florence Memorial Hospital. My parents refused to tell my brother and me what was wrong with her. We came straight from church. It was midwinter, gray and misty. My mother took her bright spring flowers from the florist shop near the newspaper, and she seemed pleased we'd come.

Her funeral a week later was held at a Baptist Church, on a bright sunny

day. I believe that was Saturday. On Sunday it rained. My mother said that was just Miss Jesse May watering our garden. Within weeks, we moved home to Greensboro, where I joined Miss Chamberlain's second grade class at Braxton Craven Elementary. That week we were asked to bring a poem to class and read it aloud. I chose Robert Louis Stevenson's poem "Rain," a simple ditty lodged in my head to this day.

The rain is raining all around,

It falls on field and trees,

It rains on the umbrellas here,

And on the ships at sea.

His message seems clear. Rain feeds the Earth and oceans and connects us all to each other. But Miss Jesse May was right, too. Rain is holy, perhaps the holiest of waters, blessed by a much higher authority than a mere priest in robes, the farmer's best friend, the poet's perfect metaphor. Why else is water mentioned just thirty-nine words into the Book of Genesis, even before the Almighty made light to separate the day from night, even before He made land and stars, the beasts of the field, the birds of the sky and man. We bathe in water, we baptize new life with it; rainwater washes away dust, cleanses city windows and the windows of the soul; makes the world green and forever new.

In Judaic, Moslem and even some Christian beliefs, Sunday is considered the first day of the week. In broader Christianity, however, it is the Lord's Day of rest, a final day of the week, Sabbathday: meant to be honored by doing little more than resting and making prayers of Thanksgiving. The name "Sunday" derives from pre-Christian Hellenic astrology and was considered to be the "Day of the Sun" celebrated by ancient Romans, a pagan symbol of light eventually adopted by emerging Christian culture. For this reason, many early Christian churches were constructed so worshippers faced East, the direction of the rising sun.

In 312, after Christ reportedly appeared to him in a dream the night before a battle against his leading rival, Rome's Emperor Constantine officially legalized Christianity and, legend holds, converted to the new religion himself. Nine years later he decreed the Day of the Sun to be a day of rest for everyone, extending a lone exemption to gardening types.

"Persons engaged in agriculture may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits; because it often happens that another day is not so suitable for grain-sowing or vine-planting; lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost."

Seventeen centuries later, any self-respecting weekend gardener fully grasps the Emperor's logic on the matter, which explains why on rainy Sunday mornings, lest the bounty of heaven be lost, I'm prone to skip church in favor of getting gloriously wet and dirty in my garden.

Besides, as the Dorothy Frances Gurney ditty that stood on a standard in my mother's voluptuous peonies for decades sagely reminded, one is nearer God's heart in a garden than anywhere else on the Earth.

I take that fully to heart, aiming to wring every earthly pleasure possible out of a long rainy Sunday. Following garden work and a nice hot shower comes a guilt-free nap, time with a good book or an old movie, an evening walk with wife and dogs and an early supper — in short, the perfect way to start, or conclude, a busy week.

If one happens to drift off to sleep with the sound of soft rain purling in the gutters the way it did in those far-away years on a porch, with the faintest rumble of distant thunder hinting at hurricanes that never quite arrive, all the better. Such is a true bounty of Heaven.

Contact editor Jim Dodson at jim@saltmagazinenc.com.

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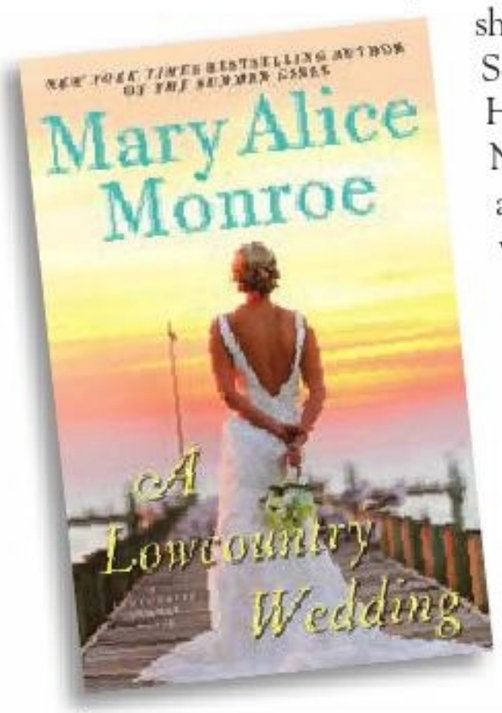
Strang Theory

The Cape Fear Pirate Club's inaugural "Suits and Strangs" Cannon Ball will be held on Thursday, May 5, at 8 p.m. Featuring live music from local faves The Midatlantic and Raleigh-based bluegrass sensation Chatham County Line, this don't-miss-it concert will be a night of 100% North Carolina sound. Four words: Wear your dancing boots. Doors open at 7 p.m. Brooklyn Arts Center, 516 North Fourth Street, Wilmington. Tickets: $23/advance; $25/day of show. Info: 2016cannonball.eventbrite.com.

Lowcountry Lovin'

Nationally bestselling author Mary Alice Monroe, longtime Charleston area resident, will celebrate the May 3 release of her new novel, *A Lowcountry Wedding*, in a big way. Huge. Supported by the Charleston Visitor's Bureau and Ashley Rhodes Event Designs, she's giving away a Southern wedding. Here's how it works:



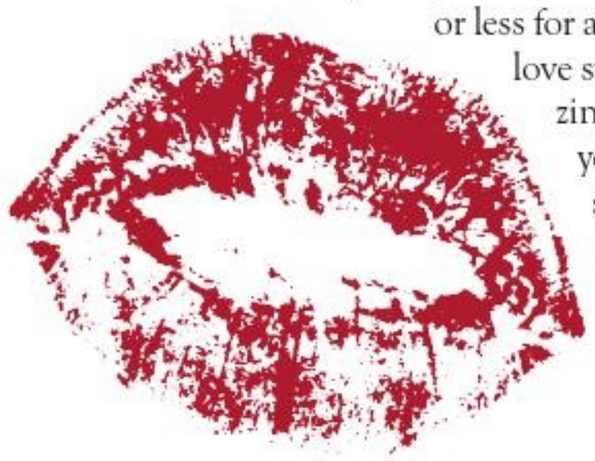
Now through May 31, couples are encouraged to send in a brief video highlighting why an intimate Lowcountry wedding at the historic Legare-Waring House would be their dream come true. (Find contest here: MaryAliceMonroe.com) And on Friday, May 6, 5 p.m., Monroe will be at Silver Coast Winery (Ocean Isle Beach) with *A Lowcountry Wedding*, the fourth installment of her New York Times bestselling series. Info: (910) 287-2800 or MaryAliceMonroe.com.

The New Orange

The Orange Street ArtsFest returns this Memorial Day Weekend with vendor booths popping up like wildflowers between Front and Third Streets (beside the Hannah Block Historic USO/Community Arts Center). Saturday, May 28, from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m., and Sunday, May 29, from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., peruse original works in acrylic, oil and watercolor, sculpture, drawings, graphics, wearable art, leather, jewelry, clay, glass, fiber, metal work, mixed media and more. Orange never looked this good.
Info: wilmingtoncommunityarts.org/orange-street-artsfest-2.

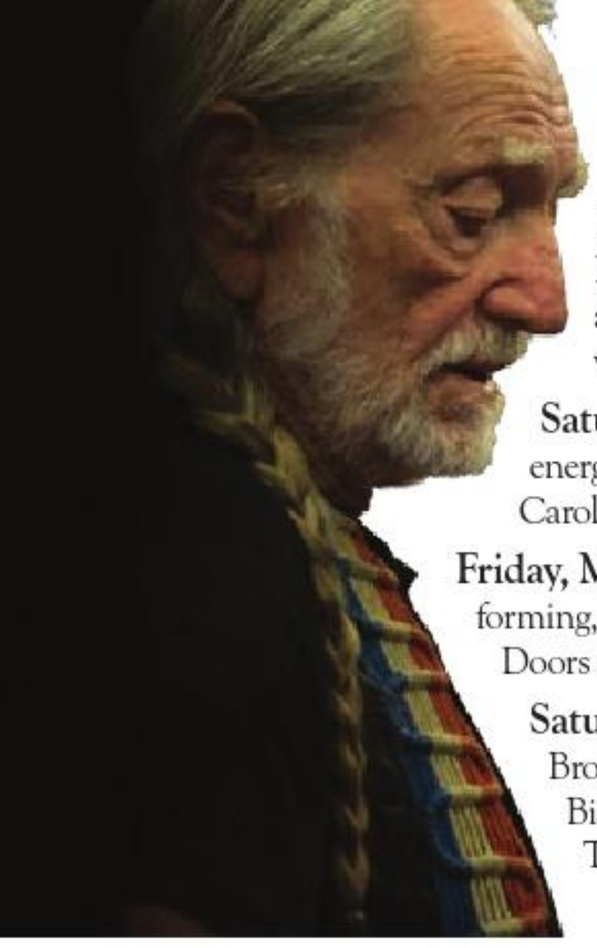
Don't Forget to Write

Like to kiss and tell? We hope so – because we're asking you for details. Describe your greatest summer romance in 100 words or less for a chance to see your inimitable love story in the pages of *Salt* magazine this summer. Simply email your submission to ashley@saltmagazinenc.com using the subject line "Summer Romance." Entries needed by Monday, May 16, 2016. We have butterflies already.



Gather Round, Folks

Saturday, May 14, marks Feast Down East's third annual "Raise the Barn" benefit, a gourmet farm-to-fork event featuring dishes prepared by locally renowned chefs. Tapas-style dinner and benefit supporting local farms and fisheries; includes participating chefs from 22 North, Catch, Ceviche's, Chef and the Farmer, Hops Supply Co., manna, PinPoint Restaurant, Plantation Village, Rx Restaurant and Bar, Surf House, and UNCW Campus Dining. And did someone say desserts? Yup. Plus an open bar with local beer and wine, and a specialty cocktail: Carolina Bourbon infused with Newberry's Blueberries. Meet the chefs, meet the farmers, and get down to the sweet music of local faves L Shape Lot (also homegrown). Hours: 6–10 p.m. Tickets: $80; $150 (for two). New Hanover County Arboretum, 6206 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: www.feastdowneast.org.



Going Greenfield

Holy Moly. Check out the lineup at Greenfield Lake Amphitheater this month. A doozy punctuated by wildman Willie Nelson. The gators and waders will meet you there.

Saturday, May 7, 6 p.m. Big Something: high-energy alt rock straight out of Burlington, North Carolina. Doors open at 5 p.m. Tickets: $15-$20.

Friday, May 13, 7 p.m. Sister Hazel: twenty years after forming, this alt-rock group explores the realm of country. Doors open at 6 p.m. Tickets: $25-$30.

Saturday, May 14, 7 p.m. St. Paul and the Broken Bones: a six-piece soul band based out of Birmingham, Alabama. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Tickets: $28-$32.

Wednesday, May 18, 6 p.m. Trampled by Turtles & The Devil Makes Three: two for the money. Bluegrass/folk-rock and Americana. Doors open at 5 p.m. Tickets: $30-$40.

Tuesday, May 24, 7 p.m. Willie Nelson and Family: Nelson's new lineup includes some of the members of his old road band, The Record Men. Doors open at 6 p.m. Tickets: $72-$99.

Greenfield Lake Amphitheater, 1941 Amphitheatre Drive, Wilmington. Info: greenfieldlakeamphitheater.com/events.

If the Shoe Fits

Cinderella completes the City Ballet's inaugural season as resident ballet company at the Humanities and Fine Arts Center. Original staging by City Ballet Artistic Director Andrea C. Hill juxtaposes fantasy and romance with poignant family drama, set to an incredible orchestral score by Sergei Prokofiev. The magic happens on Saturday, May 21, at 7 p.m., and Sunday, May 22, at 3 p.m. Tickets: $25; $20/seniors; $10/students & children. CFCC Humanities and Fine Arts Center, 701 North Third Street, Wilmington. Info: cfcc.edu/capefearstage/cinderella.

Crowning Glories

Unleash the drama, aka your seersucker and wackiest chapeau, at the Wilmington Symphony's Kentucky Derby Party on Saturday, May 7, from 5–8 p.m. Combine "the most exciting two minutes in sports" with scrumptious hors d'oeuvres by Bon Appetit, bluegrass music by Massive Grass, a drawing for the 2016 Audio Raffle, and insanely elaborate hats, and you'll start to get the idea. We at *Salt* dare you to try to out-hat Cyndi Lauper's 2012 doozy — you know, the orange dish hat with the brim that vaguely resembled the rings of the planet Saturn? Tickets: $45. Proceeds benefit the Wilmington Symphony and its youth education programs. Coastline Convention Center, 501 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: www.wilmingtonsymphony.org or (910) 791-9262.

Show Me the Challah

Of course it's no coincidence that Holocaust Remembrance Day, Israeli Independence Day and Mother's Day all happen during the 2016 Wilmington Jewish Film Festival, an assemblage of eight award-winning feature films that explore motherhood, contemporary Israel, American pop music by a Jewish composer, and the aftermath of the Holocaust in Germany, France, and Hungary. All screenings at Thalian Hall Main Stage. Here's the bill:

Sunday, May 1, 3 p.m., *Labyrinth of Lies* (2014; German, with subtitles). Directed by Giulio Ricciarelli, this history/drama starkly portrays the conspiracy of silence and indifference by the German government to prosecute the crimes of former Nazis.

Monday, May 2, 7 p.m., *Marvin Hamlisch: What He Did for Love* (2013, English). This American/British biopic documents the life story of Marvin Hamlisch, the musical prodigy accepted to Juilliard at age 6. Film contains footage from many of his actual performances and interviews with his collaborators, colleagues and family.

Tuesday, May 3, 7 p.m., *Dough* (2015, English). An old Jewish baker played by Jonathan Pryce (*Game of Thrones, Pirates of the Caribbean*) struggles to keep his London kosher bakery business alive. Since his sons have no interest in keeping the business going, the baker hires a young Muslim apprentice who sells cannabis as a side gig. Bet you can guess why challah sales begin to soar.

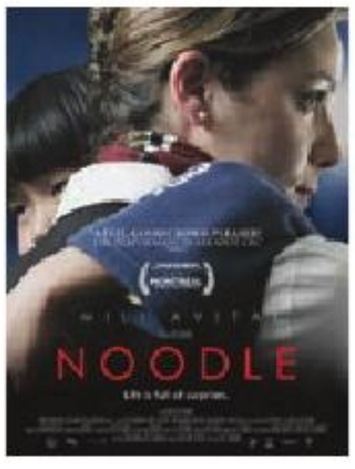
Wednesday, May 4, 7 p.m., *Once in a Lifetime* (2014; French, with subtitles). A fact-based French movie about a teacher who immerses her high school students in a creative educational competition that reveals to them the terrible impact of the Holocaust on young people during the Second World War. *Holocaust Remembrance Day (Yom Ha Shoah) begins this evening at sundown.

Sunday, May 8, 3 p.m., *Noodle* (2007; mainly Hebrew, some English & Mandarin, with subtitles). An El Al airline flight attendant, twice-widowed due to the ongoing Israeli-Arab conflict, develops a maternal relationship with an abandoned Chinese boy whose migrant-worker mother has been deported back to China.

Monday, May 9, 7 p.m., *The Last Mentsch* (2014; German, with subtitles). Born Menahem Teitelbaum, Marcus Schwarz has ignored his Jewish heritage all his adult life. Now an old man, he decides he wants to be buried in a Jewish cemetery, but he cannot produce written evidence or the testimony of his family (all dead) to prove his Jewish identity to the rabbis.

Tuesday, May 10, 7 p.m., *Raise the Roof* (2015, English). Hitler gets no posthumous victory in this triumphant documentary film's saga of the 2014 restoration of the elaborate roof and painted ceiling of an eighteenth century wooden synagogue in Poland that was destroyed by the Nazis. Architectural history comes to life as the film traces reconstruction and resurrection at the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw.

Wednesday, May 11, 7 p.m., *Beneath the Helmet: From High School to the Home Front* (2014, English and Hebrew, with some subtitles). This coming-of-age Israel/U.S. documentary film follows the journey of five Israeli high school graduates who are drafted into the army to defend their country, a demanding, inspiring experience, that reveals who they are and who they want to become. *Israel Independence Day (Yom Ha Atzma'ut) begins at sundown, commemorating the declaration of independence of Israel in 1948.



Tickets: $15 (Sunday films); $10 (weekday films). All-Festival Pass: $80. See website for more details, including short films, guest speakers, and post-film Q&A sessions. Info: www.wilmingtonjff.org.

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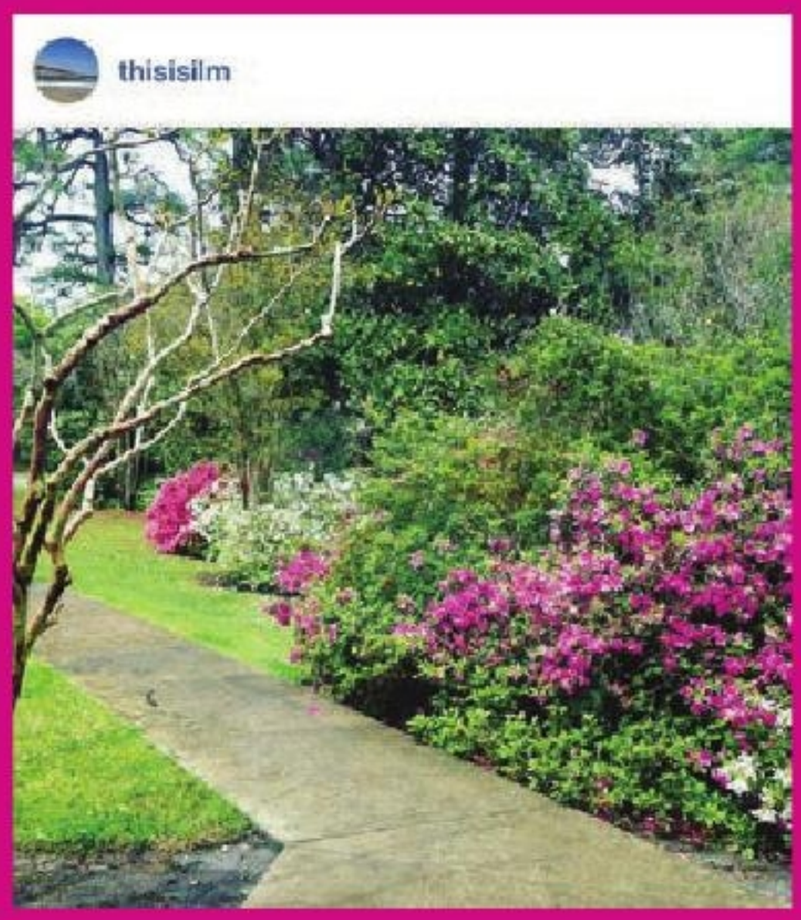

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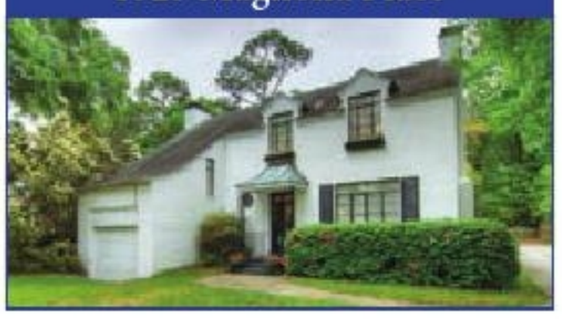

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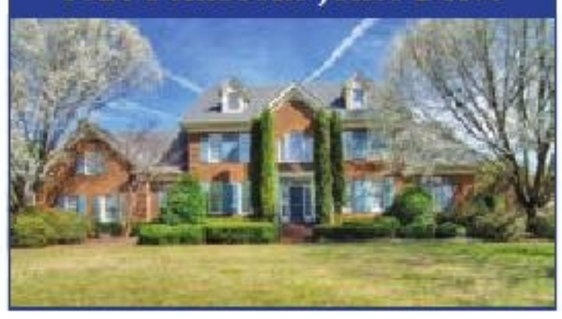

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The First Apartment

It was quirky – and humble – but it was home

By Ashley Wahl

I'm thinking back to my first apartment without roommates, a third-floor perch in downtown Greensboro on North Eugene Street. At once I'm standing in the narrow kitchen, early light filtering through the sash window while the aroma from the French press warms the air. Outside, a struggling band of potted herbs lines the rickety fire escape, and I can almost hear the neighbor pouring cereal next door.

On a sunny April day in 2011, while looking for a place to call home in the city I knew from my college days — days not too long gone for a dreamy young poet embarking on a grand new adventure with Greensboro's then infant *O.Henry* magazine — my stomach turned. *This is it,* I recall thinking. On the shadowy fringe between a vibrant downtown and the city's scenic and fashionable Fisher Park, I'd found my future home in the form of a quirky 1950s brick apartment — and, frankly, I was terrified.

And yet, through the eyes of an eternal romantic and recent boomeranger, the space had that "starving artist" type of character that made it oddly charming. Creaky wooden floors in the main living space. Retro black-and-white tiles in the bathroom. A quirky niche in the bedroom wall fit for a rotary dial phone.

At $475/month, the price was right — even if there were cockroaches living inside the wafer-thin walls.

The building itself, L-shaped with four two-bedroom units and five one-bedroom units, had a common area with pollen-caked patio furniture situated between the front entrances. No one ever used those doors (we entered through the back, up the fire escape), but if you stood quietly in the internal stairwell, you could hear an odd, echoey amalgam of what was happening in your neighbors' apartments: laughter, arguments, guitar practice, dinner parties, football games — everything slightly amplified.

Before filling out the rental application, I knocked on a neighbor's door — a doe-eyed twenty-something I'd just seen watering railing planters on the fire escape balcony. She looked friendly, like someone who might offer insight into what it was like to actually live there.

"Come in," she said, holding her door open as I entered a breadbox of a kitchen with a half-stove and colorful coffee mugs hanging from tiny hooks above the kitchen sink.

Her living room, whimsically curated with fairy lights and vintage furniture, was quaint and cozy — just the kind of spot you'd pick for a young singer/songwriter with a mustached tuxedo cat named for silent film star Buster Keaton. The space was unmistakably hers, yet I could clearly see it filled with my own second-hand furniture, favorite books lining the living room shelves, my grandma's drop-leaf table snug against the wall of the tiny kitchen.

Among the idiosyncrasies: stubborn windows, walls thin as Bible pages, outlets that would require two-prong adapters. In the summer, my future neighbor warned me, I'd have to choose between the deafening drone of window units or being too hot to sleep. But the sparkle in her eyes confirmed there was something special about this place, and I could feel it too.

Because it was small — no bigger than 500 square feet — I didn't bring much furniture. Not that I would have had much to bring if space weren't limited. Having lived with roommates in a furnished apartment at UNCG before boomeranging back to my parents' house as a college grad trying to find my footing in the midst of the Great Recession, I simply hadn't acquired much. A tired leather love seat, a small TV stand, a glass-top end table leftover from my grandparent's yard sale, and my *pièce de résistance* — an antique vanity dresser I'd picked up from a curbside in Mount Airy and spray-painted sea-foam green. The kitchen table doubled as a writing desk, and my largest investment was the $200 futon that served as couch and guest bed.

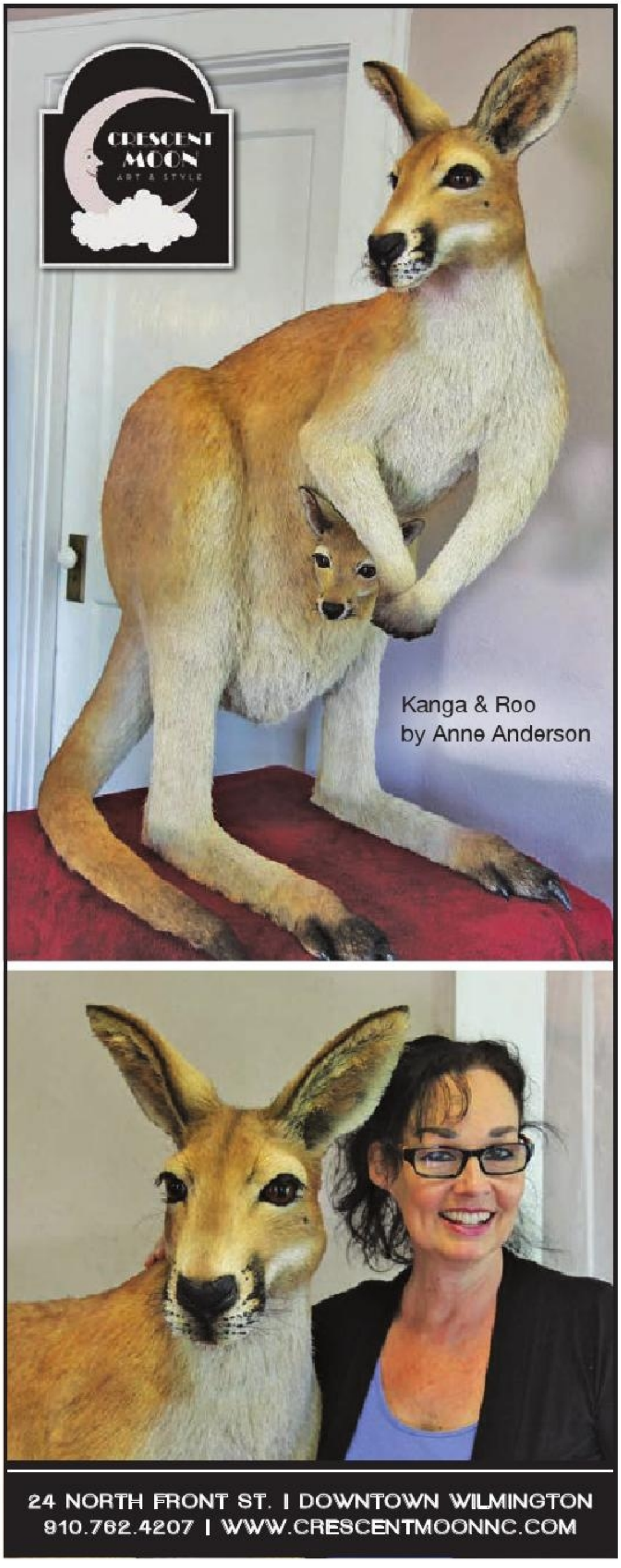
But the space had great natural light, and on quiet mornings, I recall feeling deeply grateful for the tiny world that felt all mine — even if I'd been up half the night thanks to the college-age couple downstairs who decided to "rearrange their bedroom furniture" after Thirsty Thursday.

Life was raw and simple, and the intimate moments shared between neighbors — intentional or accidental — allowed me to see the beauty in the ordinary.

I knew it was temporary, but for nearly two years, while I penned stories for a magazine whose famous namesake is known for his twist endings, that one-bedroom space on North Eugene was my sanctuary in the literary city that granted me space and experience enough to understand, on a deeper level, what it means to be home.

As for my twist ending? I wouldn't have changed a thing.

Senior editor Ashley Wahl now has a struggling band of potted herbs on her Wilmington porch.



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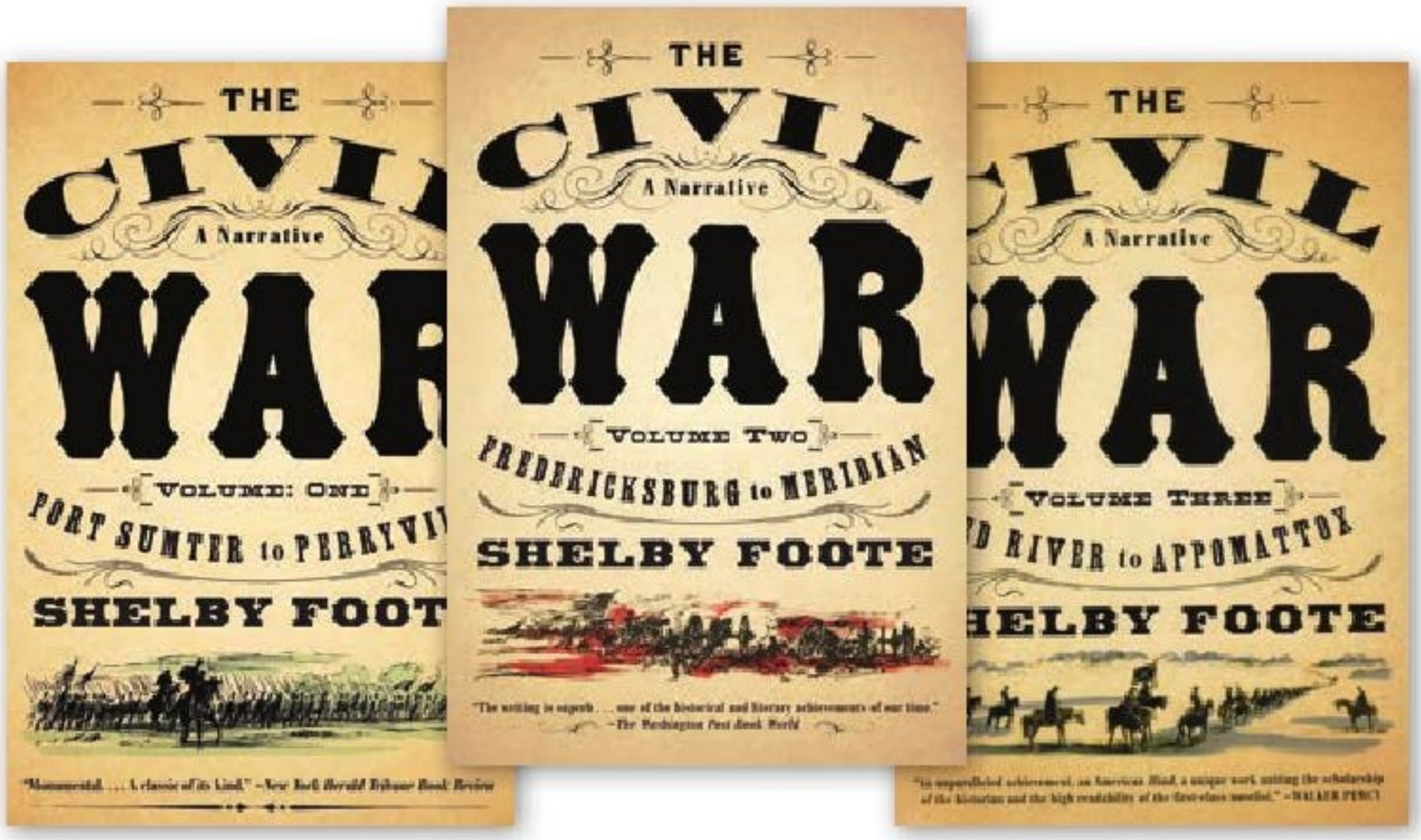

By Stephen E. Smith

When novelist/historian Shelby Foote neared the conclusion of his epic three-volume *The Civil War: A Narrative*, he was faced with the necessity of transporting his readers as well as the subjects of his history, the Civil War veterans, from Reconstruction into the mid-twentieth century. He'd already produced nearly 1.4 million words (all of them written with a dip pen on unruled paper) so it was imperative that he create a transitional passage that was factual, succinct and visual. What he wrote was one of the finest sentences in American English: "Once a year at least — aside, that is, from regimental banquets and mass reunions, attended more and more sparsely by middle-aged, then old, then incredibly ancient men who dwindled finally to a handful of octogenarian drummer boys, still whiskered for the most part in a clean-shaven world that had long since passed them by — these survivors got together to honor their dead."

What's remarkable about the above sentence is it's not remarkable in the context of the narrative. It doesn't draw particular attention to its epigrammatic, informational, and transitional excellence. What it does is emphasize a simple truth: Shelby Foote was incapable of writing a bad sentence.

The final volume of *The Civil War* was published in 1974, and the trilogy has sold briskly ever since, with a surge in sales during the airing of Ken Burns' 1990 documentary *The Civil War*, in which Foote made ninety appearances. The resulting book sales made Foote a millionaire.

So what's new with a publication that's been sitting on bookstore shelves for over forty years? The Modern Library has made available a new hardback edition, a boxed set, of Foote's masterwork that includes a ninety-page booklet of criticism and biography, *American Homer: Reflections on Shelby Foote*, and his classic *The Civil War: A Narrative*, edited by Jon Meacham. The small book focuses on Foote's life as a writer and on the strengths and weaknesses of the trilogy, with a smattering of the correspondence between Foote and his lifelong friend novelist Walker Percy thrown in for good measure (the entirety of their surviving letters is collected in *The Correspondence of Shelby Foote & Walker Percy*, edited by Jay Tolson).

Reading the ten essays in *American Homer* requires that readers take a fresh look at Foote's masterwork, its origins, literary idiosyncrasy, and compositional strategies. Since Foote considered himself first and foremost a novelist who just happened to be writing a definitive history of the central event in the American experience, there has always existed a tinge of envy on the part of academically trained historians. Foote did not include footnotes or an index with his work, thus thumbing his nose at academics, and in "History and Memory," Gordon-Reed quotes historian Gary Gallagher's payback: "his [Foote's] research did not approach what would be considered an acceptable standard among contemporary scholars, who typically spend a great deal of time combing through unpublished manuscripts." Gordon-Reed concludes that *The Civil War* is a good account "of the politics of war, but not at all a good account of the social and cultural forces surrounding the conflagration . . ."

Foote is also taken to task for his admiration for Nathan Bedford Forrest, who was no doubt complicit in the massacre of black troops at Fort Pillow and would later serve as Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan. Moreover, Gordon-Reed maintains that Foote failed to demonstrate a humane understanding of the plight of freed blacks after Appomattox, implying that they weren't ready for emancipation and that the former slaves themselves were the problem. In "Foote and the Problem of Race," Michael Eric Dyson notes that Foote overcame his "ignorance" of black culture but "forgave himself his aversion to the black bourgeoisie because they did little more than imitate white folk."

These well-worn criticisms notwithstanding, readers who read the trilogy years ago might want to reread Foote's masterpiece with an eye to appreciating anew the depth and breadth of his achievement. Not only did Foote produce a history that has remained pivotal to our popular understanding of the war, he achieved a level of excellence in storytelling that has remained unsurpassed, setting the bar high for most of the popular histories that were to follow. Stephen Ambrose, Dee Brown, Barbara Tuchman, Bernard Bailyn, David McCullough, James M. McPherson, David Hackett Fischer, Doris Kearns Goodwin, and many other historians and writers of popular histories are, in varying degrees, indebted to Foote.

If revisiting *The Civil War* strikes readers as a guilty pleasure that distracts from the avalanche of fresh literary enticements that descend upon us daily, consult Christopher B. Nelson's essay "Hello, Old Friend, Time to Read You Again," which was published in *The Wall Street Journal* on December 15, 2015 (the essay is available online).

Nelson notes that "familiar books reveal more about themselves when we attend to them anew . . . Indeed, a good book is very much like a mirror: The glass is the same year after year, but the reflection in it changes over time."

Serious readers who are approaching *The Civil War* for the first time are likely to find themselves enthralled by Foote's narrative powers and enchanted by his meticulous prose. As Don Graham, chairman of the board of *The Washington Post*, observes in *American Homer*: "Enter this book at your peril. Foote took twenty years writing it. To read it takes weeks or months; bestsellers will pile up on your table as you toil through obscure battlefields in Arkansas or Florida. But you may finish it feeling that for all its obvious faults, this is the greatest telling of our greatest story, perhaps the single best work of American history.

Stephen Smith is a poet and fiction writer who is a longtime contributor to the magazine.

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The Shadow Knows

For playwright Devin DiMattia of the sketch comedy group Pineapple-Shaped Lamps, vintage radio is a major source of inspiration

By Gwenyfar Rohler

"It's something I was always kind of fascinated by as a child — being nostalgic for a time you weren't even around for," Devin DiMattia says as he explains his interest in old-time radio. As creator of "The Crimson Shadow" for the sketch comedy group Pineapple-Shaped Lamps (PSL), it is an obvious topic to inquire about. How did a sketch about 1930s radio drama make it into a hip, modern sketch comedy show with references to Joss Whedon, *Saturday Night Live* and *My Little Pony?* DiMattia's "Crimson Shadow" is a lovely (and very funny) homage to Lamont Cranston's "The Shadow" radio program about a vigilante crime fighter (Orson Welles voices some of the episodes). But DiMattia's creation includes the behind-the-scenes drama between the actors and management as much as the on-air script. Life is much harder for "The Shadow" off-air with losing his girlfriend to the Foley artist and finding himself under the thumb of small-minded management. Compared to that, crime fighting is a breeze. DiMattia admits that he owes a lot to Garrison Keillor's *A Prairie Home Companion*.

"I had a unique upbringing when it came to radio," DiMattia comments. "The Greensboro Library had Orson Welles' original radio broadcast of the 'War of the Worlds' — and Welles did that thing where it tricked you that it was happening right now." That intrigued DiMattia, but in the way that an eight-track tape is interesting: something from the past.

That changed with a trip to LA. "We had been doing PSL for about a year — and then me and my brother, Andy, flew to LA to spend a week." One of their destinations was to see "The Thrilling Adventure Hour," a monthly stage show and podcast at The Largo, a nightclub in the old Coronet Theatre. "It was basically an homage to old-timey radio serials — but it was a who's who of LA comedians and voice actors," DiMattia notes. Nathan Fillion (*Firefly, Serenity*), Josh Malina (*West Wing, Sports Night* and *Scandal*), and Busy Philipps (*Freaks and Geeks, Dawson's Creek*) are part of the main cast. Guest stars have included Adam Baldwin, Jen Kirkman, Neil Patrick Harris, Nick Offerman, Patton Oswalt, Jon Hamm, Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Julia Duffy, Lake Bell, Dick Cavett, Ed Helms, Weird Al Yankovic, Wil Wheaton, and Emily Blunt, to name but a very few. "John Hodgman — he was there to see it — it appealed to

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK STEELMAN

that kind of audience!" DiMattia recalls. "It was so much fun to watch I got inspired to try my hand at writing something like that."

For DiMattia this was quite a departure. He graduated from UNCW with a film studies degree and every intention of pursuing documentary film as a career. Actually, he produced a really insightful feature-length documentary, *Firewall of Sound* (2010), about the changes in music production brought about by the Internet. "From conception to the last screening at the last film festival it [*Firewall of Sound*] was a three-year undertaking," DiMattia says. Like many things that seem to come together in his life, he was one of the early users of Kickstarter to raise money for the documentary project. "Back in 2008, Kickstarter was just beginning—I heard about it from one of the guys I was going to interview for my film. He was friends with one of the guys who started it. When it started, you had to email the guys who started it and pitch your idea to them to get an invite code." DiMattia pitched and was invited to explore the platform for crowd funding his project. It was actually a perfect match for a film about the changing economics of the music landscape.

But in the meantime he had stumbled into life with PSL. Wesley Brown put together the troupe at UNCW to be a monthly *Rocky Horror* shadow cast. Eventually The Browncoat Pub & Theatre invited them to move the shadow cast downtown, and then start a regular comedy show. "All of us were big *Saturday Night Live* fans so we christened the show *Thursday Night Live*," DiMattia notes. His early role was mostly behind the scenes: filming, social media, etc. But slowly the confidence built. "For the third season of *Thursday Night Live* I wrote a seven to eight-page script for a ["Crimson Shadow"] sketch. It was so much fun to do that I wrote a second one—and by the time I finished the third I realized I almost had a full script."

This spring, PSL produced "The Continuing Adventures of The Crimson Shadow," the first full-length "Crimson Shadow" show, at The Red Barn Studio Theatre. "If you were to have asked me six years ago . . . I would think writing a stage play would be very low on the totem pole if not nonexistent. I had graduated from college pretty sure of my inability to write—I had taken a couple of screen writing classes and my strength was in directing and editing." But he gives credit to the amazing support he has received.

"Working in PSL writing a full-length play is not as daunting as it once was . . . It's weird looking back to see all the opportunities I have been given thanks to being in this silly comedy troupe." Laughter, friendship and taking chances: possibly some of the best gifts anyone could receive.

Gwenyfar Rohler spends her days managing her family's bookstore on Front Street.

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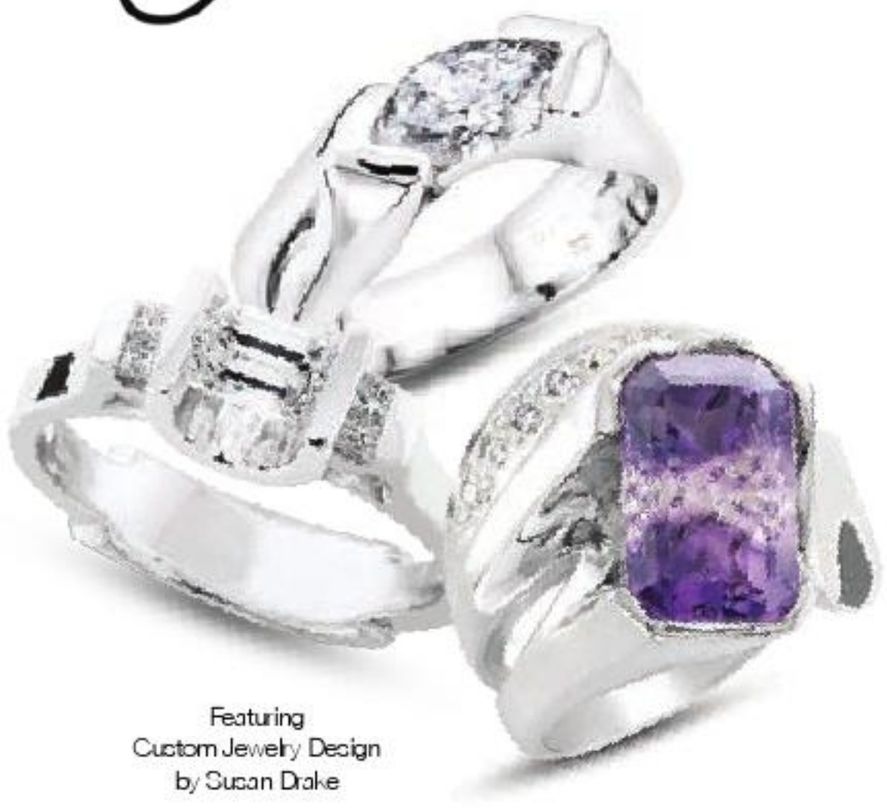

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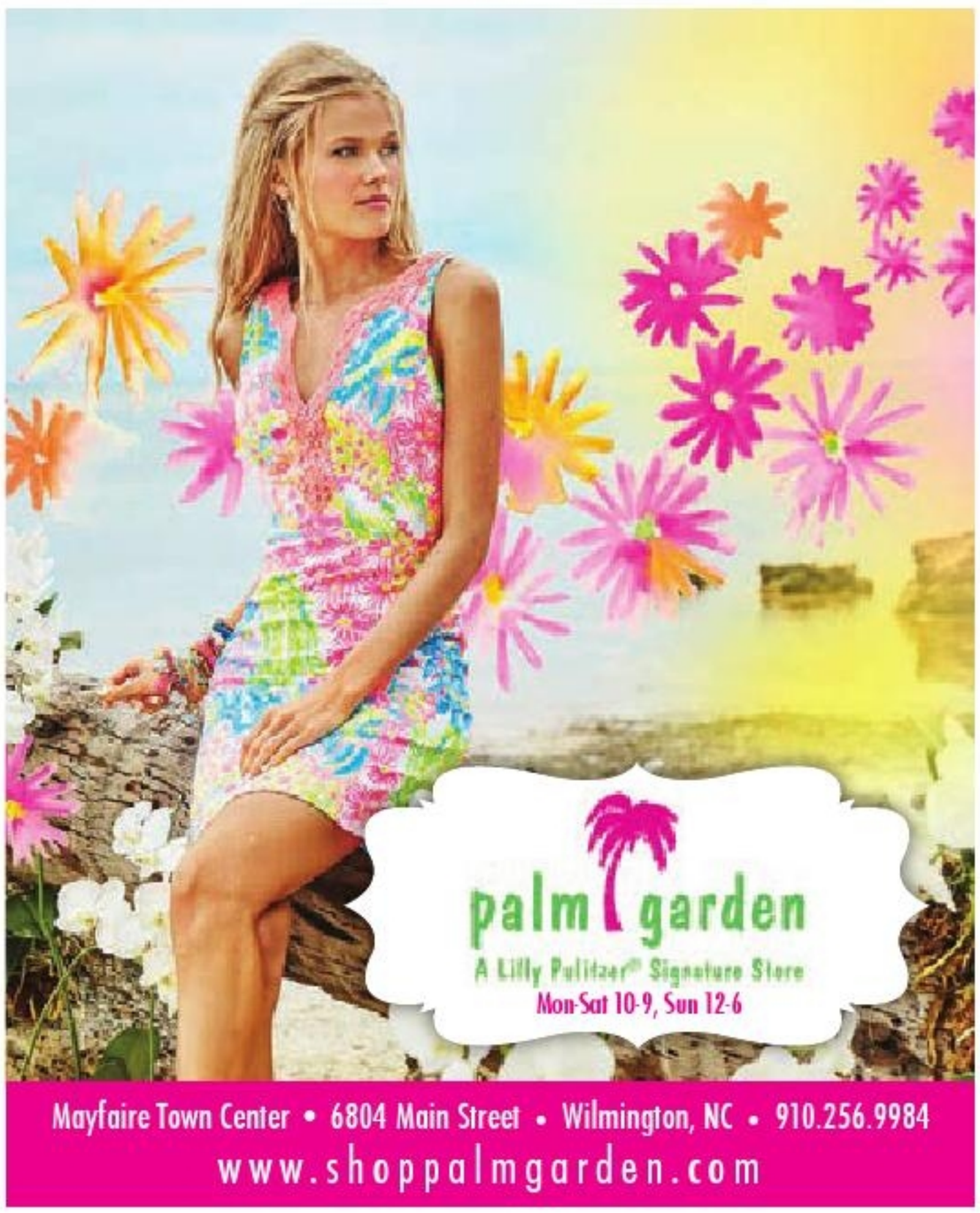

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A Walk for Ice Cream

A granddaughter's hand, a true sign of spring's return

By Bill Thompson

It was a cold, gray spring morning just a few weeks ago, the kind of morning that makes you want to wiggle down into the covers of the bed and hide from the dismal pledge of the cloudy sky. But I overcame the pull of that self-indulgence and plunged through a Saturday of household chores that I had put off all week. Well, maybe more than a week. My wife said we needed to begin the annual spring cleaning ritual, at least the indoor portion that involved cleaning out closets.

As usual, I acquiesced to her stringent urging (some would say nagging, but not I, dear) and applied myself to the job at hand throughout the morning. Happily, just as we sat down to lunch, my daughter and granddaughter arrived. After we had all eaten lunch, my granddaughter announced that she wanted to "help Granddaddy." Sounded good to me.

A few minutes after we started to work, we decided we needed a break. I knew that meant a trip to Pierce and Company, the venerable general store less than a mile down the road from the house. They have ice cream, the same kind we keep in the freezer; but there is something special about Pierce and Company ice cream: You have to go there to get it.

As if on cue or, perhaps, at the direction of my granddaughter, the dark clouds that had hung around all morning gave way to sunshine as we left the house and headed down the way to Pierce and Company.

There are few things that compare to the feel of sunshine as it touches a body accustomed to the cool, damp air; but the touch of a small child's hand in yours is matchless. I shared those two feelings as we set off toward the store.

I felt almost euphoric as we walked across the lawn. The faint smell of rain still lingered as just the smallest breeze stirred the small blades of green grass that emerged through the brown sepulcher of winter. Our feet sank into the soft wetness of the lawn, leaving little elongated pools of new water just recently separated from the clouds.

There's a long white fence that leaves the edge of our lawn and separates a pasture from the road that leads to the store. Horses used to graze there, but now there is only an old barn, the rusted and torn remnants of its tin roof blowing in the easy breeze, the sunlight catching the movement that bounces the light like fairy dust across the roof and through the pecan trees around the barn.

"Look, Granddaddy!" A white heron emerged slowly from the edge of the woods by the road. The gangly, elegant bird lifted its skinny legs in exaggerated steps, its long neck darting into the water that had slipped the banks of the ditch along the road and merged with the flooded stand of pine trees and sweet gum.

There was a distinctive smell of wet leaves and pine straw. Some of the arbor-born detritus had shifted from the floor of the woods to the edge of the road as the water had risen, then receded, leaving a wavy brown embroidered edge between the road and the ditch.

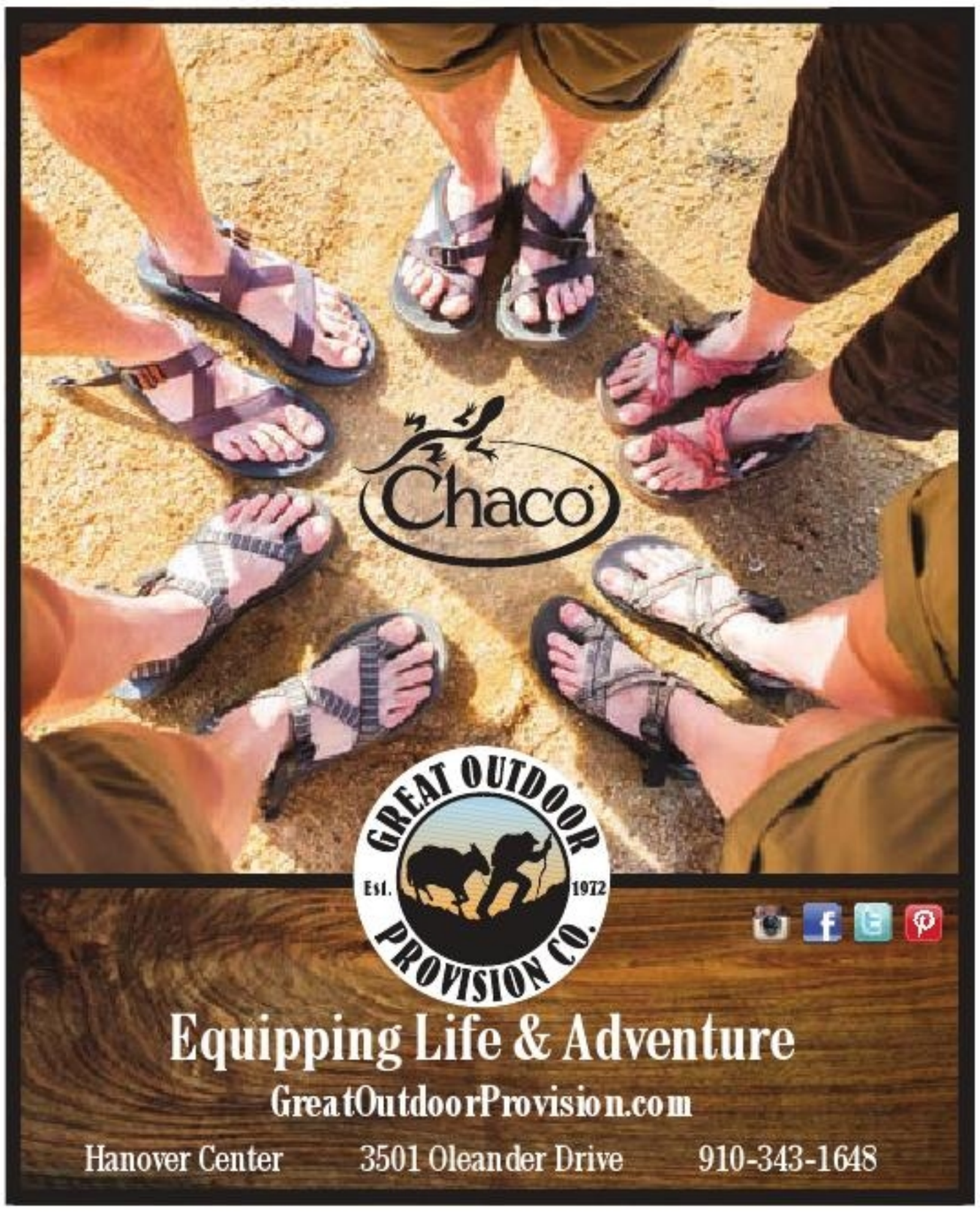
Just beyond the woods before we got to the store sits an old church. Built back in the late nineteenth century, it has ceased to have a congregation but has served many purposes over the years: library, clubhouse, Boy Scout hut and VFW hut. Now it sits abandoned. I keep the yard mowed out of loyalty. It's where my family went to church before the new one was built down the road apiece, about 1930. The white paint has begun to fade again, but the old, long-paned windows are still intact and the structure remains sturdy — just like the people who built it. Our people.

Not a car had passed since we left the house, so the sudden swish of water and rush of wind as a big truck whooshed by startled both of us, and I felt the squeeze of a little hand. I liked that.

We entered Pierce and Company through the side door (actually the main entrance), and I was immediately swept back in time as I always am when I go into the old store. I have often recounted the mystical transformation of time in that place. Of course, we got the ice cream immediately; but while we were eating it, I strolled through the gardening section thinking about what we would plant for our spring garden. There is a special sensation that goes through a body as you sift seeds through your hands, as you lift small bundles of plants and feel the soil around them. It's like you're feeling life itself.

We finished our ice cream and headed home. As we got out the door of the store, the rain began to fall, first slowly and then steadily. We had not brought an umbrella, and we didn't have our raincoats. So she just held my hand tightly and we walked home in the rain, stopping occasionally to splash the mud puddles. I believe the ice cream at the store is special.

Bill Thompson is a frequent – and wise – contributor to Salt *magazine.*



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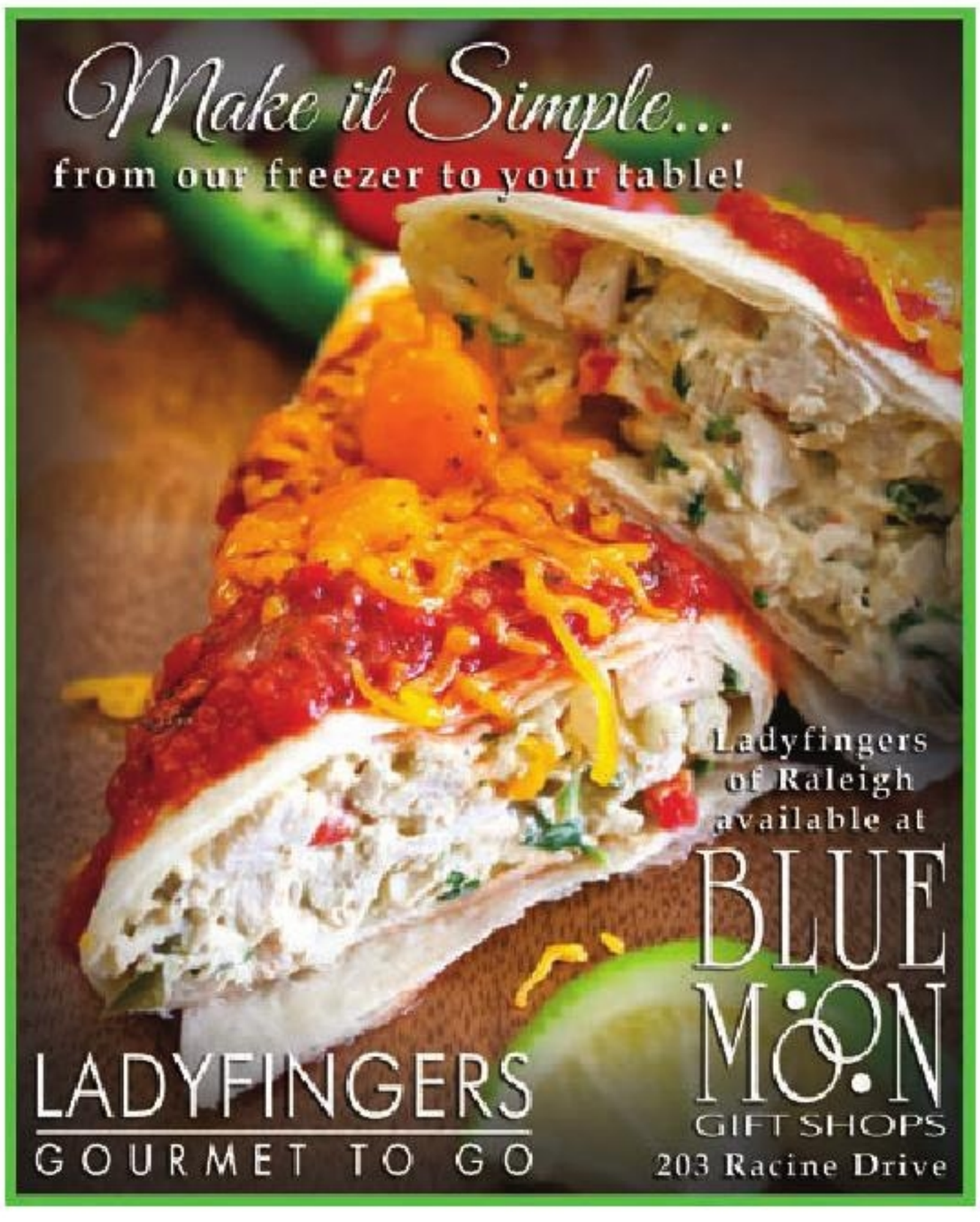

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Voice of Plenty

At Fork-n-Cork, audiobook narrator Karen White savors bar fare with character

By Dana Sachs

I was standing inside Fork-n-Cork downtown when a slight woman with a bright, expressive face pushed open the door and looked expectantly in my direction.

"Are you Karen?" I asked.

She broke into a grin. "And you're — do you pronounce your name 'Day-na' or 'Dan-na'?"

"Day-na." I laughed, because people rarely ask me that question. I wasn't surprised, however, that she did. Karen White is a professional audiobook narrator, so it's her business to pronounce things correctly.

As I discovered over lunch and the coffee that followed, accuracy is only the beginning of White's job. Over nearly two decades in this profession, she has recorded some 250 audiobooks. She doesn't just read a text. She uses her voice — at once mellow, animated and versatile — to perform it.

White, who moved to Wilmington from Los Angeles three years ago, began her career as a traditional actress, sharpening her skills with theater and improv. Because her voice is naturally deep, she told me, she could play male roles as well as female ones, a talent that came in handy for gender-blind versions of Shakespeare. She played Snug the Joiner, for example, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Orlando in *As You Like It*. For improv shows, she typically took on six or eight roles in a single performance.

That experience served her well when she started recording books in 1999 because, as an actor, she thinks about audio narration in a physical way. If an author describes a character as "angular," for example, White will "apply that to the voice" by making her words sound sharper and more emphatic. Her goal is to "paint a picture with a voice the way a writer does with words." This kind of specificity helps differentiate individual characters when the narrator jumps from voice to voice, playing every role.

"Well-respected narrator Robin Miles once described it," White said, "as playing tennis against yourself and running back and forth to each side of the court."

Typically, White will spend eight hours preparing before she ever begins recording an eight- to ten-hour book. During that time, she reads through and highlights the text: pink for each new character, orange for physical details about them, blue for adverbs describing speaking styles, and yellow for words she doesn't know how to pronounce. This research, she says, helps her "figure out who they are in my body," so that she can create a singular voice for each character, then record a sample of that voice to keep for reference. Sometimes differentiating characters can be difficult, especially when they're similar. Once, she had to come up with distinctive voices for twin brothers, "who the author describes as having very similar voices, but if they sound the same, it'll be confusing to the listener."

When White first began recording audiobooks, "hardly anyone" listened to them, and the production process "was much clunkier." She can remember hauling around heavy audio hard drives that only held enough memory for a single book. As digital storage and upload capacity increased, however, changes helped fuel a boom in the audiobook industry, lowering production costs and expanding offerings. According to the Audio Publishers Association, sales reached an estimated $1.47 billion in 2014, up nearly 14 percent from the year before, and the number of titles has quadrupled since 2010. Improved technology also means that White can now produce audiobooks herself. "It's just me in a room with a

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES STEFIUK

mic, a computer, some sound equipment, and the Internet," she told me. As she records, she will stop and edit, or even re-edit, only moving forward when she's satisfied with the result.

White talked articulately about her profession, but it was when our food arrived that her dramatic skills really became obvious. Fork-n-Cork is a tiny place that combines the conviviality of a pub with the culinary virtuosity of an innovative restaurant. We started with Confit Duck Wings, slow fried in duck fat with thyme and juniper and then slathered in either Habanero Orange Marmalade or Chipotle Raspberry Sauce (this dish is to Buffalo wings what foie gras is to calves' liver). White took a bite, then collected her thoughts. "The sauces are so, like—" she broke into a raspy laugh: "Whoa! It's rich, but it totally falls off the bone."

Fork-n-Cork might elevate bar fare, but it isn't a restaurant for dainty eaters. We pretty much abandoned our manners. The Crispy Chicken Salad arrived as a platter-sized serving of crunchy fried chicken breast, hard-boiled egg, crumbled bacon, blue cheese, onion, tomato and avocado, all arrayed over mixed greens. You had to go at it "like a salad bar," as White put it. The Kyle Style Burger was basically two meat sandwiches in one—a hamburger with a slab of slow-cooked brisket on top. Extravagant in every way, the smoky indulgence would, White noted, "kill you if you ate the whole thing." At least you'd die satisfied.

By now, our fingers were red and sticky and we'd gone through a pile of napkins. "Everything here, you don't wear a nice shirt," White pointed out. "And don't come on a first date. Come with someone who knows you well and is not judgmental."

In the 17 years since she began recording audiobooks, White has attached her voice (or maybe I should say her voices) to hundreds of books, from Ellery Adams' cozy mysteries to Gothic horror ("thopse give me nightmares") to Julie Klam's *You had Me at Woof*, a dog memoir (or "dog-oir") that White called "so funny." She has read political diatribes "that were so far from me politically that I did it by a different name" and nonfiction books that deepened her under-

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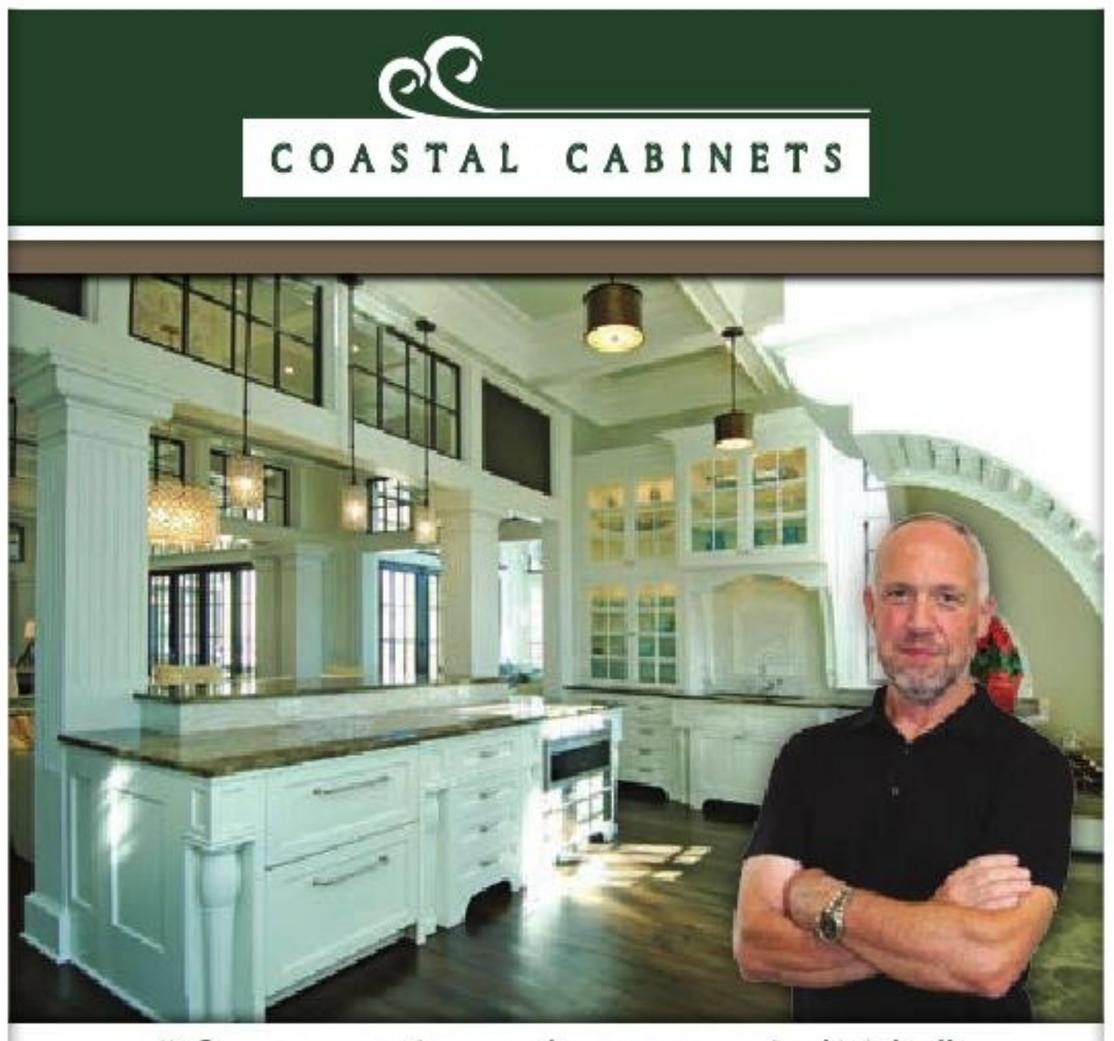

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standing of international affairs. After completing Barbara Demick's *Nothing to Envy: Ordinary Lives in North Korea*, White found herself asking, "How can this be going on in the world and I had no idea?"

White records her books in a tiny studio built by her husband in the attic of her house. In winter, she's often cold, and in summer, she sweats. Still, she loves her work. "When it's best is when it just sounds like a story," she told me. "It's like me, when I've had a beer and I'm out with a friend and telling stories."

She paused, then edited herself a bit: "Me, but smarter and funnier."

For more information on Karen White's recordings, visit karenwhiteaudiobooks.com. Fork-n-Cork is located at 122 Market Street in Wilmington. You can find out more about the restaurant by calling (910) 228-5247 or by visiting the forkncork.com.

Dana Sachs' latest novel, The Secret of the Nightingale Palace, *is available at bookstores throughout Wilmington.*

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The Great Plantain Switcheroo

Also known as the perfect breadless sandwich

By Jason Frye

I thought I was getting plantains on my sandwich. Was I ever wrong.

There are two groups of people reading this right now. One group is asking, "What the hell is a plantain?" The other group is asking, "Why the hell would you get a plantain on a sandwich?"

To answer the first question: A plantain is like a giant banana. You've probably seen them in the grocery store and said, "Look at that giant banana going bad." That's a plantain. It's a little heartier than a banana, a little starchier, and less sweet. Most of the time when you see them on the menu at some Central American or Caribbean restaurant they're pan-fried or mashed, sometimes made into a chip. I like them pan-fried.

In answer to the second question: because they're delicious, that's why.

But as it turns out, I didn't get plantains on my sandwich, my sandwich was plantains. Or, rather, the bread was a plantain. Maybe it was two plantains. Either way, my sandwich was not made with bread, it was made with two pieces of smooshed flat, slightly under-ripe plantain into which a phenomenal sandwich had been made.

No one warned me; the waitress didn't raise an eyebrow when this *güero* ordered Jibarito de Pernil, a sandwich the menu very clearly states is "made with flattened plantains instead of bread." I just got what looked good and this looked good.

Roasted pork. Mayo. A little cheese. Lettuce. Tomato. And plantains. I envisioned a big round sandwich on that awesome Mexican bread, like a torta piled high with carnitas, a smear of mayo on one side of the bun, a smear of almost caramelized plantain on the other bun, all coming together in the sandwich of sandwiches.

But no. What I got resembled a foot-long sub on a strangely curved piece of yellow bread. I could see the pork and the lettuce, but no bread, just this, this, this plantain-wich. I was genuinely perplexed.

For a long moment I studied my plate, turning it this way and that, taking pictures for Instagram and trying to get a feel for how to start eating this thing. I decided I should eat it like a sandwich, so I grabbed the "sandwich."

I expected to find the plantain mushy or greasy or somehow unpleasant to touch, but it felt solid and hearty, like a good piece of bread. It was fried, but not greasy; crispy, but not burned. Most importantly, it passed the taste test.

Most bread is unremarkable and on a sandwich really serves only one purpose: to keep you from eating peanut butter and jelly off your fingers like a savage or a preschooler — but this plantain, it added a dimension, flavor, texture. It improved the sandwich. Where the pork was rich and just a little greasy (as good roast pork should be), the plantain offered a little starch to balance it out. Where the lettuce was cool and crisp, the plantain was a little warm and, though the outside was a little crispy, the inside was creamier in texture. The tartness of the mayo was tempered by the mild sweetness of the plantain. It was perfect, the ideal bread for this breadless sandwich, a total surprise, and now a new favorite in my sandwich rotation.

You'll find this sandwich at: Paso Fino Restaurant, Bar & Lounge, 29 Van Campen Boulevard, Suite 109, Wilmington (beside the Walmart and Cracker Barrel). Info: pasofinobarandlounge.com

Jason Frye is a travel writer and author of Moon North Carolina *and* Moon NC Coast. *He's a barbecue judge, he rarely naps, and he's always on the road. Keep up with his travels at tarheeltourist.com.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW SHERMAN

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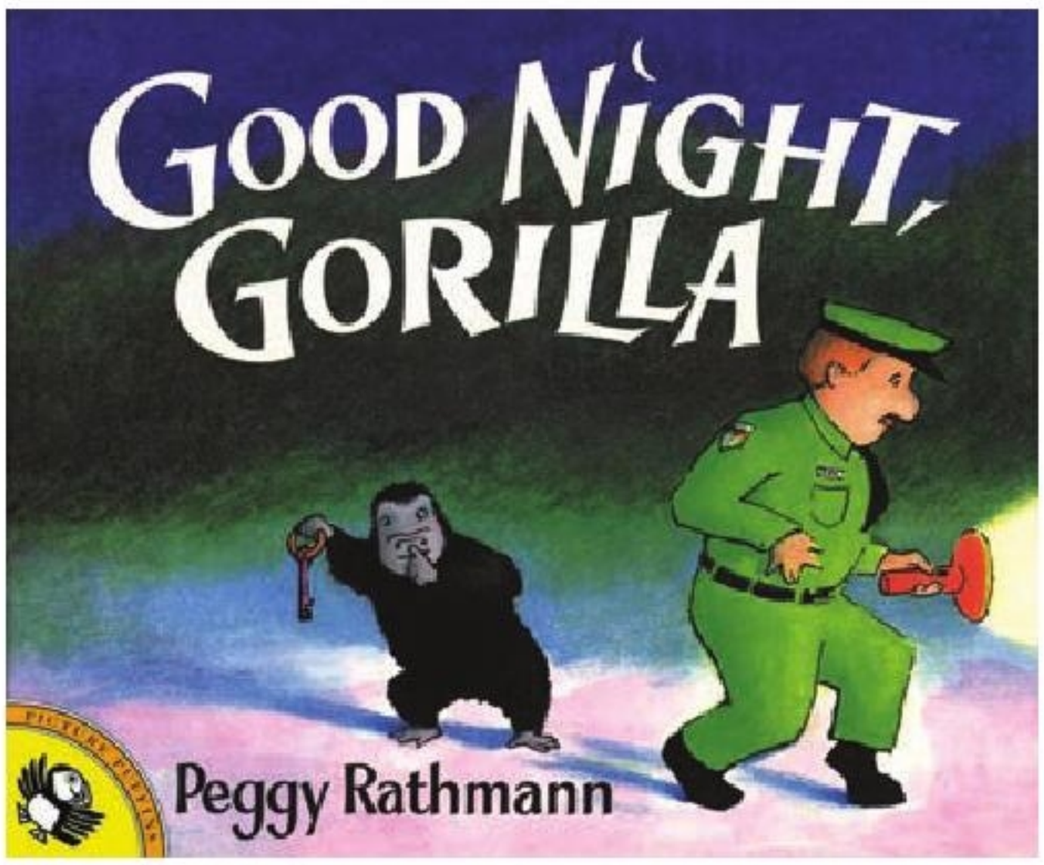
How to Tell a Story

The sweet circularity – and simple wisdoms – of a child's favorite book hold a valuable lesson for any storyteller

By Wiley Cash

Recently, my reading life has been comprised of two distinct genres: literary fiction and children's books. I'm honored to be serving as one of the judges for a prestigious fiction prize that results in dozens of books arriving at my door every few weeks. By the time my fellow judges and I select a winner, I expect to have read somewhere around fifty books. This high dose of heady literature is balanced each evening when I read to our 18-month-old daughter before she goes to bed. She's always loved books and she's had many favorites over the course of her short life, but she hasn't loved any of them as much as she loves *Good Night, Gorilla*, by Peggy Rathmann.

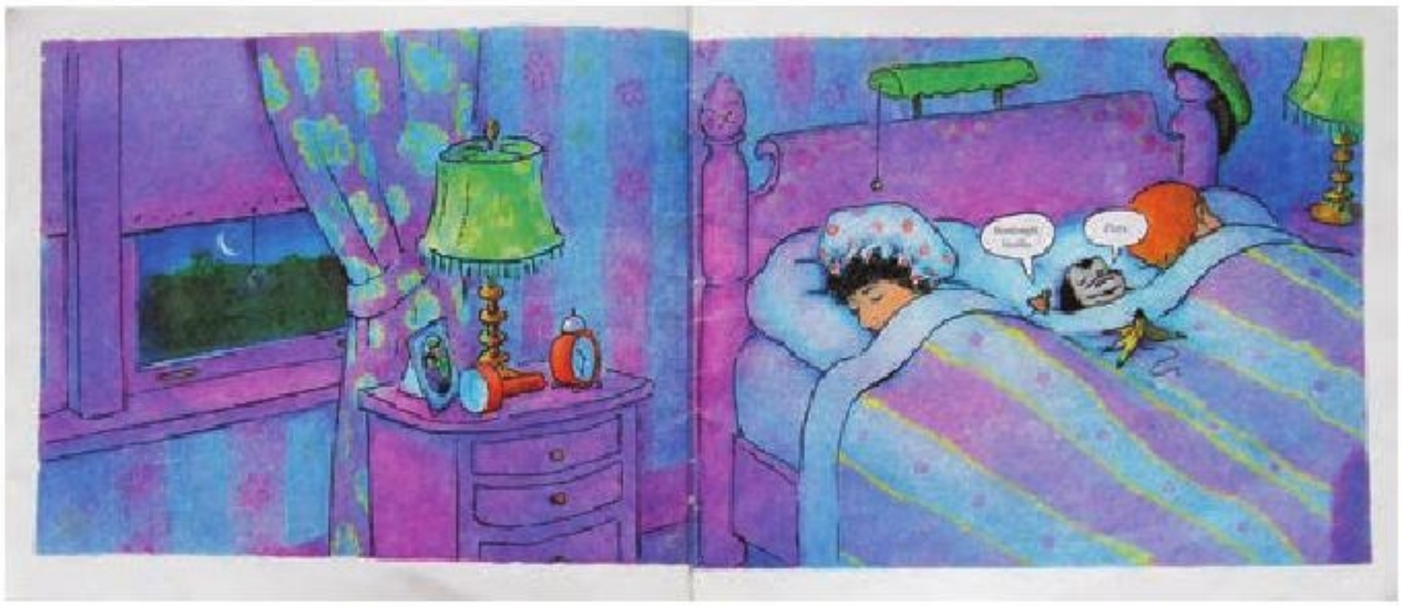


Each day I spend several hours working on my bloated, overdue novel, and each night I spend a few hours reading the best of contemporary fiction. Sandwiched between these literary pursuits, I read *Good Night, Gorilla*.

Whether I'm reading or writing, I always step away from the text and ask questions like: *What am I learning about fiction writing? What makes these characters interesting? What makes this story move forward?* Perhaps I shouldn't admit it, but I've learned more about how to tell a story from *Good Night, Gorilla* than I have from my own novel or any of those contest entries. When your own novel has swelled to over 450 pages and you're appraising hundreds of pages of fiction each week, to discover that an illustrated children's book has nailed the art of narrative with a simple story that stars a gorilla and a zookeeper can be a sobering realization.

The book opens as a zookeeper stops by the gorilla's cage to say, "Good night, gorilla." When the zookeeper passes by, the gorilla swipes the keys from his belt and unlocks his own cage and frees himself, a balloon, and the gorilla's friend, a tiny mouse that drags a banana along behind him. As the zookeeper says "good night" to more animals — an elephant, a lion, a hyena, a giraffe and an armadillo — the gorilla and mouse trail behind and unlock their cages. All of the animals follow the oblivious zookeeper home to his bed, where his wife discovers the interlopers and marches them back to the zoo. The closing pages show the sneaky gorilla following the zookeeper's wife back home and climbing into bed with the couple. The last scene is his friend the mouse saying, "Good night, gorilla."

I've literally spent hours considering why the story in *Good Night, Gorilla* works so well. Perhaps the primary reason is the gorilla, a character with which readers have grown familiar over the centuries. The gorilla follows the trickster archetype, a figure that uses his or her intelligence to outsmart authority. The trickster is often portrayed as a rabbit, and we've seen him many times in folk tales about Br'er Rabbit and cartoons featuring Bugs Bunny. Even Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer borrows from the trickster. These are characters you can't help



but root for. There's something delicious about a powerless individual using his or her cunning to get one over on those in charge. Finding this centuries-old archetype in a contemporary children's book reminds me that there are no new stories to be told. A character's rise from powerless to powerful will always interest readers.

There's also a circular nature to the story that both my daughter and I find satisfying. The book opens with the zookeeper telling the caged gorilla good night, and it closes with the gorilla's friend the mouse telling him good night from the zookeeper's bed. This circularity reminds me of what you may find in a performance by a talented comedian. My brother Cliff is a professional comedian, and he explained to me how some comedians use a "call back" to close their shows. The comedian will open with a solid joke, move on, and then close his or her set by referring to the initial joke. The audience feels as if they've joined the comedian on a journey that closes with recognition of their shared experience, a wink and a nod that we're back where we started although we've covered so much ground. When I think of this I think of the books I've read that end by revisiting the opening pages with the knowledge that the characters have grown and developed.

As the story of the gorilla's night folds back on itself, you're able to see how many of the story's threads have continued since being introduced: the balloon that escapes the gorilla's cage appears higher and farther away on each page. For my daughter, it's fun to find the balloon on each page. For me as a writer, it's a reminder to keep track of even the most minor characters, regardless of how far they float away from the central story. The tiny mouse that drags the banana is also something my daughter looks for throughout the book, and I can't help but see him as a character that struggles with something he can't let go. The cast of characters themselves (a hyena and an armadillo are friends?) serves as an example of how good stories start: Put a bunch of distinct people together and something interesting is bound to happen.

This fall I'm teaching a course in fiction writing at UNC Asheville, and I've been considering which novels and story collections my students should read as we attempt to write stories and novels of our own. For college students, one of the main financial burdens is the high cost of text-books. Perhaps I'll give them a break and ask that they purchase only one book, *Good Night, Gorilla*. They may even own it already. It may be tucked away on a forgotten bookshelf or boxed up in their parents' attic. Perhaps they've forgotten how much they loved it, and perhaps they'll find literary value in it all these years later.

Wiley Cash is a New York Times *best-selling author whose second novel,* This Dark Road to Mercy, *was released last year. He lives in Wilmington.*

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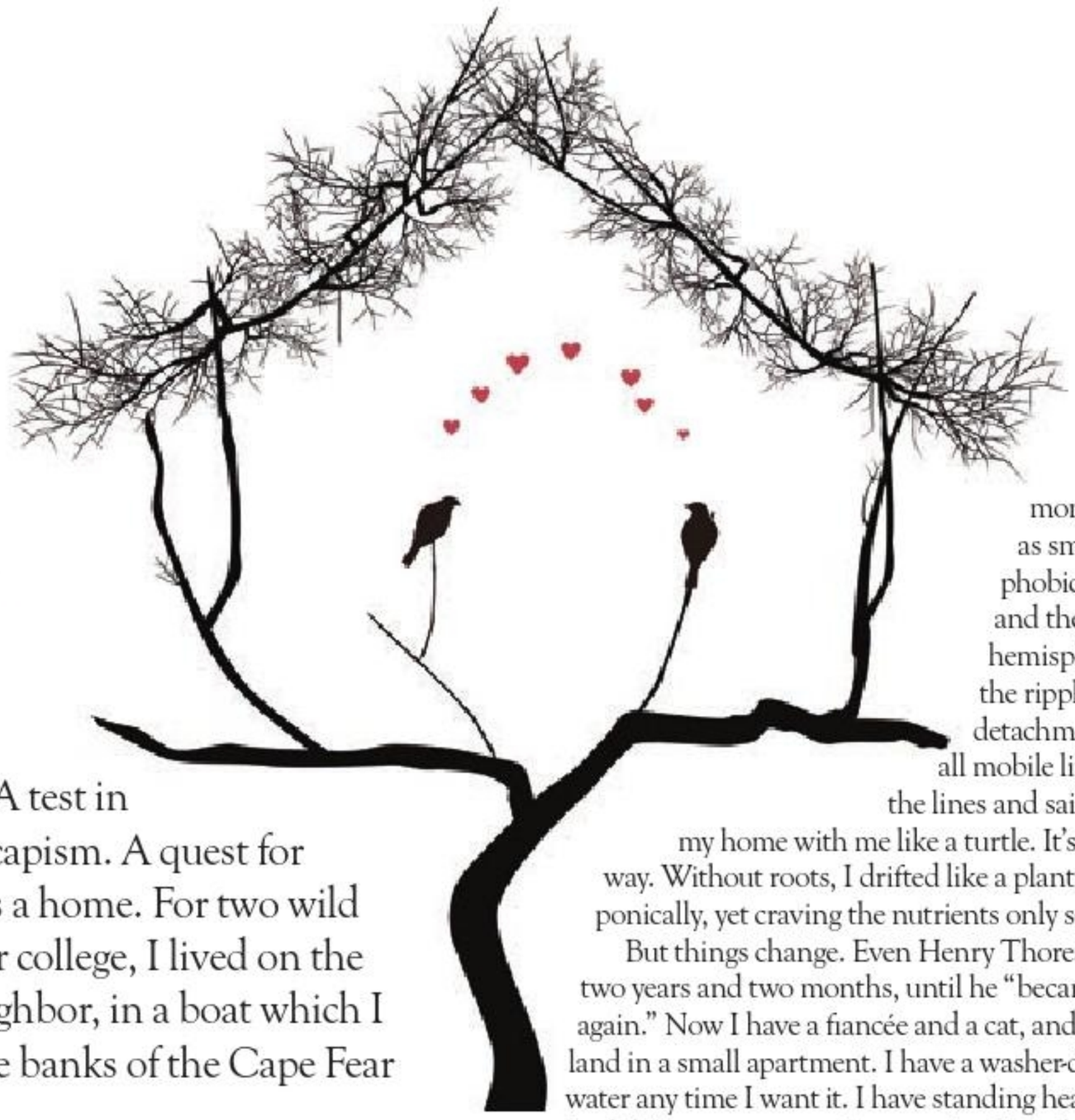
Home From the Sea

In search of a definition for "place," a gifted writer comes ashore to find home and a lovely garden to tend



By John Wolfe

At the urging

of a man who has been dead for 154 years, I decided to conduct an experiment with my life. A test in simple living, a trial in escapism. A quest for what it is that truly makes a home. For two wild and untethered years after college, I lived on the water, miles from any neighbor, in a boat which I had bought myself, on the banks of the Cape Fear River and beyond.

I bought her for $500 cash from a stranger on Craigslist. She had been sitting abandoned for months, and it would be a gross understatement to say that the interior of the 26-foot-long vessel was disheveled. Whole walls were missing. So were hatches and toilets and stoves and other things necessary to life. Garbage was piled everywhere in big plastic bags. She was essentially hollow, my little sloop, a small empty space I intended to fill with love again.

Little by little, as the lease on my apartment ran out, I worked at crafting a weatherproof and cozy dwelling out of the fiberglass shell I had purchased. I built a tripartite companionway hatch, sturdy and handsome, and a shallow box to cover the hole over what was to become my bed so it would not rain on my head at night. With the help of new friends at the marina (who had the practical knowledge I was lacking), I replaced my missing wall. I installed a head. A head is boat-speak for a toilet. This was a very important step in the restoration. I repaired the alcohol stove so I could cook simple two-burner meals. I scrubbed her and painted her, inside and out, and gave her electric light. Finally, a week before I graduated, I donated or sold my earthly possessions that wouldn't fit into 125 square feet, christened her *Athena* after the Greek goddess of wisdom, and moved aboard.

My floating home was simple, efficient, and most of all, cheap. I lived like King Neptune, feasting on all that the water provided for me, for under $300 a month. I wanted for no necessity. And as small as it was, I never felt claustrophobic because I could open the hatch and the whole sky was mine, the grand hemisphere of sun and stars that ended at the rippling water's edge. It was the ultimate detachment from place, a simple and above all mobile life. I got used to being able to untie the lines and sail wherever I wanted to go, taking my home with me like a turtle. It's wonderfully freeing to live this way. Without roots, I drifted like a plant floating on a log, growing hydroponically, yet craving the nutrients only soil can provide.

But things change. Even Henry Thoreau only lived in his little cabin for two years and two months, until he "became a sojourner in civilized society again." Now I have a fiancée and a cat, and for the last year we have lived on land in a small apartment. I have a washer-dryer and central heating and hot water any time I want it. I have standing headroom, a place to do yoga. And if he didn't protest so much every time I tried to do it, I could literally swing my cat in the space I have now. Honestly, the apartment is more comfortable for us than the damp, floating, closet-sized space that was our sailboat, although the view is not as good.

Something strange has happened to Gina and me in the year since we sold our boat. For the first time in our lives together, we've felt a weird sense of routine and belonging to a place. We watch the pecan tree in our backyard bloom and drop nuts onto our back deck. We listen to the birds migrate above us, hear their strange songs. Now, instead of moving ourselves, we have anchored in one spot and observe nature moving around us — a Copernican switch, like that optical illusion of seeing a duck where once there was a rabbit.

This land-based life is totally different from how we've been housed for the past two years, but it is undoubtedly our home now. My two experiences in homemaking, one mobile and one planted, have made me think deeper about what having a home means. Is a home a place, merely, or is it more?

The answer to this question is not as simple as asking, "Where do you receive your mail?" or, "Where do you sleep at night?" A mailbox and a bed do not a home make. So then it becomes a question of scale: Thoreau loved his bean field, a few acres of Concord woods, and his little pond, but Carl Hiaasen calls his whole increasingly developed state of Florida home. Wallace Stegner

lived in the entire wide West. For Walt Whitman home meant America, all of it, and Thomas Wolfe had his Asheville — although he never could return. And looking around our own place, Wilmington, as it grows increasingly and grossly developed, we find that places change, and not always expectedly. However we hope that our homes never waver, like candles sheltered from a breeze, the places where we plant them often do.

Certainly place is an element of home, and perhaps the most visible one. But it cannot be the entire definition. For those who like to think temporally as well as physically, home can be a time that is past, like a sparkling memory of Christmas, or memories of a childhood pet.

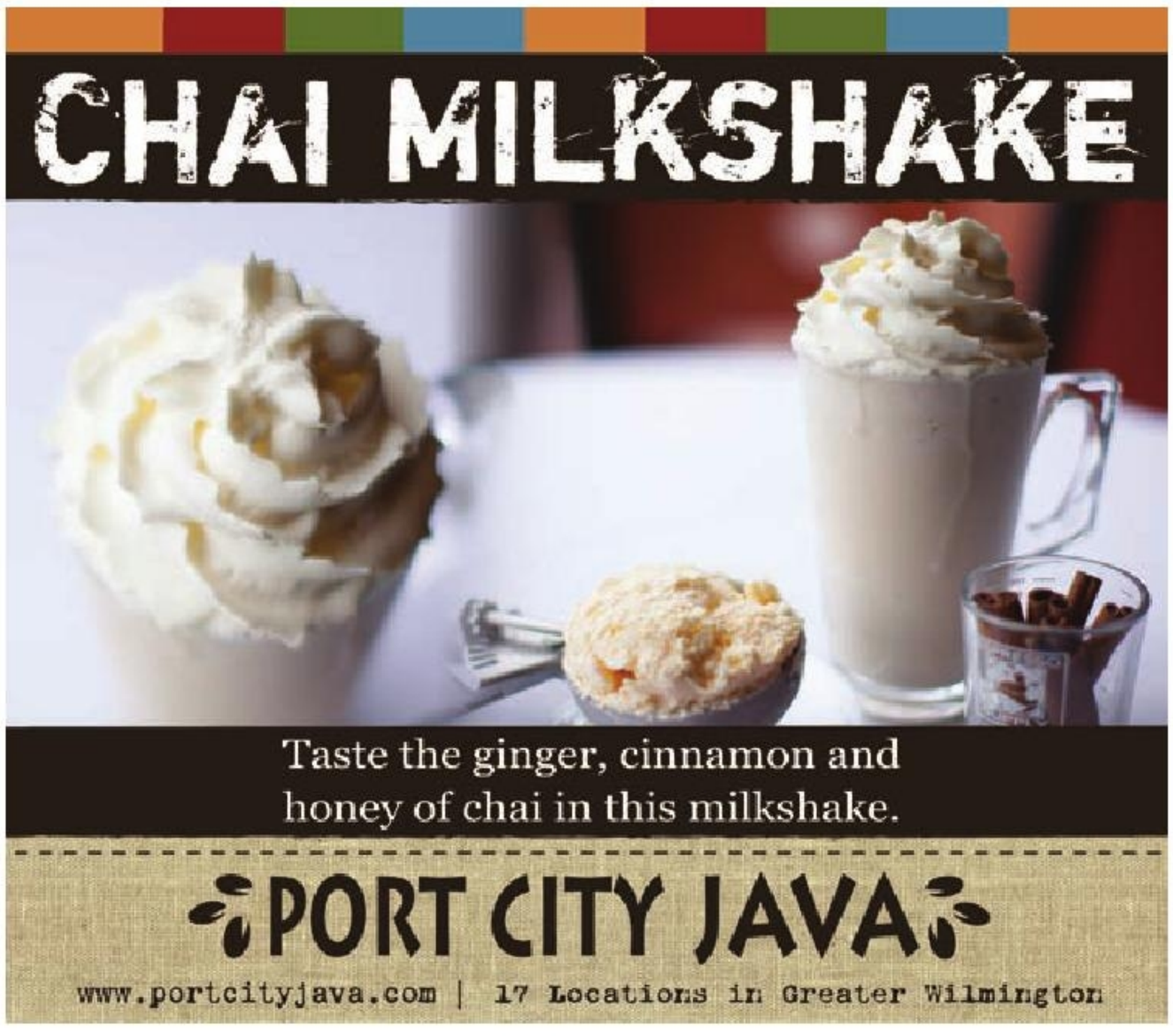
And what is a place without living things to inhabit it? A desert, and few people outside of Ed Abbey call the desert home. Our places, ecological spots where we have found our working niche, must have neighbors and animals. People whose interests sometimes vary from our own. And rather than petty quarreling about fences and property lines, guarding our allotted acres like dogs, we have to learn to cooperate with each other, to be inclusive and loving, in order to preserve our peaceful place of home for ourselves and for the other people with whom we share it.

So is home a place? Yes, it is, but not just the place where we plant our garden. Home is also the time and effort it takes for that garden to grow, and home is the people with whom we plant the seeds. Home is where the seeds of love blossom and pollinate.

Maybe Thoreau, when leaving his cabin, realized that the world was his home, the whole of it. Maybe home doesn't just have to be one place, although one place, one backyard, one street, one neighborhood, is a good place to start. Every place is connected to every other one — we all share an atmosphere, we all drink from the same waters, we all have dirt beneath our feet. The roots that we send down mingle together subterraneanly, holding hands inside the earth. By loving our own places and the people who populate them, we come to realize that we are all neighbors on this earth.

Our places can be a hearth or a wood-burning stove, a nucleus of warmth in the winter of the world. They are shelter from the rain. They are the quiet in the frantic whirlpool of our working lives. They can even be a little sailboat, cozy and warm and filled with love. For me, it is a bird feeder, a cat asleep on a sunny porch. It is where I make music, where I write. And after four years together on water and land, it has been wherever Gina is. Home is what you love and you don't want to leave, where you will always return, like a boomerang, after every adventure. Home is where love begins.

John Wolfe studied creative nonfiction at UNC Wilmington. When he's not on the water, he wishes he was.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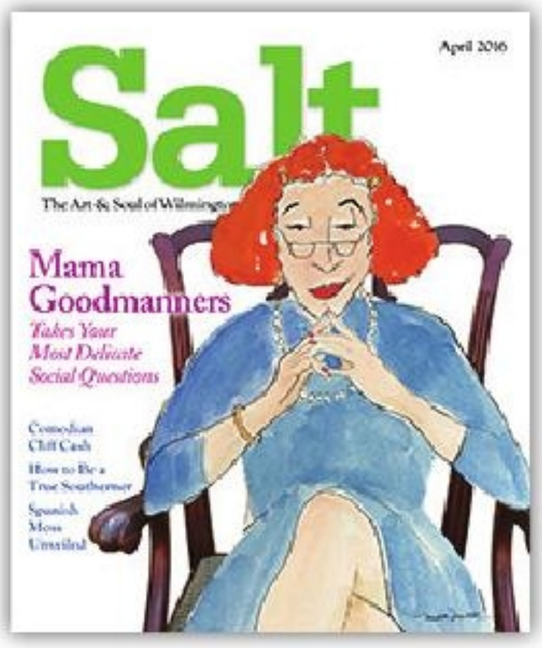

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A Window to the Past

At Legacy Architectural Salvage, what's old is always new

By Gwenyfar Rohler

"Is there going to be a window on that side?"

"Yes – a wooden one!" I assured.

"Good girl!"

I was working on permission for restoration work on part of my historic house. Wooden windows are a very important piece for the Historic Preservation Commission. I knew from experience that – of all the parts in the application – this would be one key.

If you are new to historical homeownership, finding a source for wooden windows (and other period-appropriate building and decorating materials) can be easier said than done. Enter Legacy Architectural Salvage (LAS), a project of the Historic Wilmington Foundation, located behind Stevens Hardware on Dawson Street. You drive through a chain-link fence to the back parking lot. On the left, a vast warehouse space contains a treasure trove of unexpected gems awaiting your perusal.

George Edwards, executive director of the Historic Wilmington Foundation (HWF), says he has wanted to reopen a salvage store since HWF's previous venture "shut down regretfully in 2006." Since then it has been percolating as a back burner "wouldn't it be nice, if?" project. "Dolores Williams, who is our manager, came to me a few years ago and said, 'I know you'd like to start salvage and I'll help you file some grants with the city for startup costs,'" Edwards recalls. Nonprofits don't turn down help and grant money, so Williams and Edwards began working on grants. "Its important to me because preservation of our architectural heritage is important. If we cannot preserve the entire building, we can at least preserve the competent parts," Williams observes.

"Dolores got the job because she was sincere and interested, and she works for free," Edwards confirms.

"The amount of work involved with the startup, it has basically become a full-time job," Williams notes. LAS launched in September, 2015. By March, they had already outgrown their 1,500-square-foot building. "In less than a year we've [almost] doubled the space . . . That takes a lot of manual labor to build shelves, racks, install them, design the space, keep it clean."

Edwards is pretty impressed with what has happened so far. The displays of windows, doors and mantels are stunning. "We have windows, doors, wood trim, flooring – we took part of the floor out of the old St. Mary's gym – we have been getting materials from buildings getting rehabilitated. We are doing salvage materials up to 1960 – today, 'historic' is technically 1965," Edwards notes. His time at HWF overlapped with the old salvage store by fourteen months. But he is thrilled that, in the first six months of operation, LAS has already generated what the old salvage store produced at its height.

"I think there is a greater awareness of preservation. It is very much in vogue to use reclaimed items in a unique way," Williams agrees. "For example, barn wood as table tops, head board. I would still like to find these items to be preserved." Williams hopes that in five years Legacy Architectural Salvage will triple its space and generate enough income to hire a part-time manager. "I'd like to have a deconstruction team in place where we could take down a tobacco barn to the ground. We do not have that capacity at this time. What we really need to do is take windows, foundation, bricks. We've been relying on contractors to do that deconstruction and make that donation to us."

Also, more workshops are on the horizon. "We took some of the startup money and rewired to do grounded outlets for workshops and new florescent lighting so you can see and cover our insurance," Edwards says. So far, LAS has hosted a few workshops on small projects homeowners can complete in a weekend, but the hope is to continue to grow the education component – especially with young people. Edwards hopes to develop training in deconstruction for 18- to 25-year-olds as a way to learn some entry level carpentry skills. "Architectural Salvage Greensboro does have a team that goes out and a truck – so they go out and deconstruct houses even more than we do," he says.

But in the meantime, if you need wooden windows to get your application for a Certificate of Appropriateness approved – Legacy has got you covered.

Open Saturdays from 9 a.m. –1 p.m., Legacy Architectural Salvage is located at 1831-B Dawson Street (behind Stevens Hardware). Park along the right (east) side of building. Info: (910) 762-2511 or (910) 444-1751.

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Return of the Ruby-Throated

The playful dynamo of spring

By Susan Campbell

The true herald of spring in the Carolinas might well be the first male ruby-throated hummingbirds that appear in early April. When it comes to their brilliant plumage, fiery attitude and playful antics, no other bird compares to these tiny dynamos. Although some ruby-throated hummingbirds do winter in our area, the breeding population is, as far as we know, migratory. Their welcome return from wintering grounds as far south as Costa Rica signals warm days and an abundance of flowering plants just around the corner. By May, they can be found all over the southeastern United States in a variety of habitats.

The ruby-throated is the only species of hummingbird that breeds east of the Appalachians. It is commonly found from late March through early October in our area but can be spotted in a variety of habitats from the mountains to the coast. Males, easy to identify with their iridescent, ruby-red throat patches (gorgets), return to set up territories about two weeks ahead of females, often utilizing the same spot for successive summers. It so happens that a significant percentage of ruby-throated adults breed within their natal area. Although generations may use the same general neighborhood, they are solitary creatures. Females, cryptically colored with iridescent green and white plumage, rear the young alone, a task which requires approximately six weeks of work at the nest, tending the eggs and then the nestlings. Two young are typically produced from tiny white eggs the size of black-eyed peas. Here in the Carolinas, some females may even produce two sets of young per season.

In coastal North Carolina, the first of the young ruby-throateds begin to leave their nests in early June. Lacking the bright gorgets sported by their fathers, immature males look more like their mothers until late winter. But they are feisty little flyers nonetheless, seemingly ready to antagonize each other from the moment they leave the nest. If they feel so inclined, it isn't uncommon for young males to pick fights with adults, either. Or larger species of birds. Female ruby-throateds can be just as aggressive as males. Given that they are actually some 20 percent larger in size, they have an advantage when conflict arises.

Hummingbirds' way of life requires a high-energy diet. Flight speeds upward of 50 miles per hour are not uncommon. Therefore they must consume a goodly amount of protein per day, which they find in tiny insects, spiders and mites. If you are watching carefully, you may see a hummingbird fly-catching from an open perch. But ruby-throateds actually spend most of their time foraging in thick vegetation, scouring leaves and stems for a variety of arthropods. Invariably some prey items are swallowed with the nectar from the brightly colored blooms they visit. High-quality hummingbird habitat therefore includes not only a variety of colorful plants with tubular blooms, but minimal use of pesticides — ensuring good insect diversity.

So, if you have not been feeding through the winter, now is the time to hang a sugar water feeder to attract the attention of local ruby-throateds. Hang one where it can be easily seen and enjoyed. And the more feeders you add, the more hummingbirds you will attract. A simple 4:1 (water to sugar) homemade solution is best — with no coloring (it is unnecessary and may be harmful). Just be sure to clean and refill the feeders regularly. When daytime temperatures climb above 70, they will require attention every three to five days or the solution will begin to ferment. Simply empty, scrub with hot water and a bottle brush, and then refill. Detergents should be avoided since they often leave residue on the plastic portions of the feeder which the birds can detect. Use of a periodic 10 percent bleach solution may be necessary. Just be sure to thoroughly rinse and dry all feeders before they are replaced. Then, stand back and enjoy the show!

Susan would love to hear from you. Feel free to send questions or wildlife observations to susan@ncaves.com.

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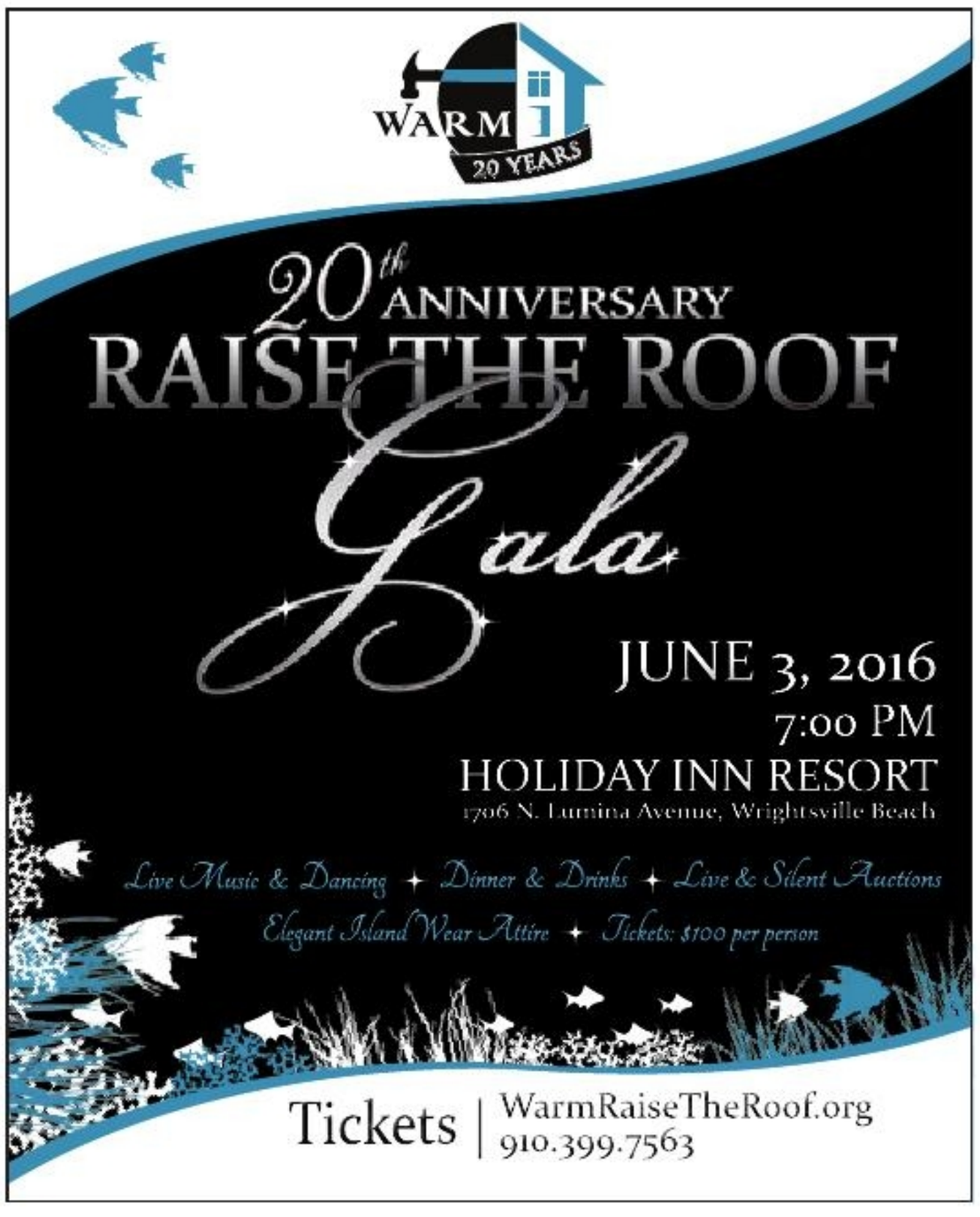
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The Dollhouse

A gift of love I failed to love; a link to the grandfather I never knew

By Virginia Holman

When I was about 6 years old,

my paternal grandfather made me a dollhouse. I didn't know my grandfather well; he lived up North and I saw him about once a year when he came through town. He didn't visit much, and we never visited him at all, a circumstance I never thought to question as a child. It was simply how things were.

I knew him from letters and cards, occasional family stories, and a newspaper column he wrote over the years for the local paper near his Quaker retirement village.

This lack of acquaintance and the formality of the few visits we had during his lifetime always made him seem a bit mysterious. Between visits, I'd occasionally get a letter or a gift. One year there arrived an ornate beer stein from Luxembourg, where he'd lived briefly. Then a leathery illustrated edition of *Little Women*, its page edges so shiny and gilded it was almost too fancy to read. His most memorable gift to me was the handmade dollhouse. I'd never had a dollhouse or even coveted one, but I was undone the Christmas morning I saw this gift under the tree. It was a partially furnished two-story dollhouse with six rooms, a fireplace (nonworking, I discovered), and two bathrooms (assumed nonfunctional), one of which was outfitted with a porcelain clawfoot tub. The roof was made of a single plank of wood with precise rectangular shingles drawn on with a black felt-tip pen. The perfection of these lines impressed me the same way I was impressed by a boy at school whose handwriting could be mistaken for typewritten pages. The windows were made of a sort of Plexiglas and each pane was also scored with this pen. The back of the house was completely open so that you could access the rooms and rearrange the furnishings. It seemed that you were supposed to imagine yourself in the house, and behind the invisible wall.

Over the years, I would occasionally receive an item for the house from him. I recall a small velvet sofa and real brass candlesticks with tiny wicked candles. Occasionally, I'd reach inside and arrange furniture. Whenever we visited the toy store, I'd look at the miniature furniture displayed in lit and locked cases. I wondered how humans, with big clunky hands, could craft such tiny marvels. There were delicate chandeliers, ashtrays, china cabinets, and miniature bone china plates. I tried to play with the house for a while,

ILLUSTRATION BY MERIDITH MARTENS

but I could never muster much enthusiasm, even though I appreciated my grandfather's gesture. I felt bored by the house I was supposed to love. I knew I was supposed to collect items and arrange them in the house and then smile happily, not just politely. I soon avoided the house with the same guilt I felt when I neglected my homework.

There was something about the house that nagged at me. I liked the house, I admired the house, but it didn't feel like my house. Over time it sat in the far corner of my room, where my two kittens, Woolie and Dandelion, shoved the furniture aside and took two rooms as their sleeping nooks.

Years later, in graduate school, I read Gaston Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space* and came across his thoughts on the miniature. He wrote, "The world is my imagination. The cleverer I am at miniaturizing the world, the better I possess it . . . values become condensed and enriched in miniature." I thought of my dollhouse. I wasn't convinced.

Later reading revealed that early German and Dutch "doll cabinets" were designed as a sort of domestic instruction for wealthy young women. One Anna Koferlin of Nuremberg sold tickets so that children could view her dollhouse, going so far as to write an educational pamphlet. "Therefore, little children," she wrote, "study everything carefully, how all is well-ordered, so that it will provide a good lesson, and when you finally have your own house, and God gives you your own hearth, which will become the work of your life and love, you will be able to organize everything in your household in a proper way. Then you will understand what your beloved parents have tried to tell you: that a house in disorder reflects the disorder of its housekeeper's mind." Perhaps that was part of what I sensed about my dollhouse: It was meant to be instructive, which left me feeling annoyed. Yet every time I saw it, I also felt a vague longing.

I don't know what finally became of the dollhouse, I'm sad to say. It vanished in the chaos between adolescence and adulthood. Nor did I ever come to know my grandfather before he passed away thirty years ago. When I do think of him, I imagine him laboring, with love, to build my dollhouse. I wonder what he would think of the woman I grew into, and if he'd like visiting the house where I live. The front of my house has banks of windows and wide porches up and down, so that you can feel indoors and outdoors at the same time, not hemmed in by walls. My old dog snores beside me as I write this, curled upon my nice velvet chair.

Author Virginia Holman teaches in the creative writing department at UNC Wilmington and occasionally guides with Kayak Carolina.

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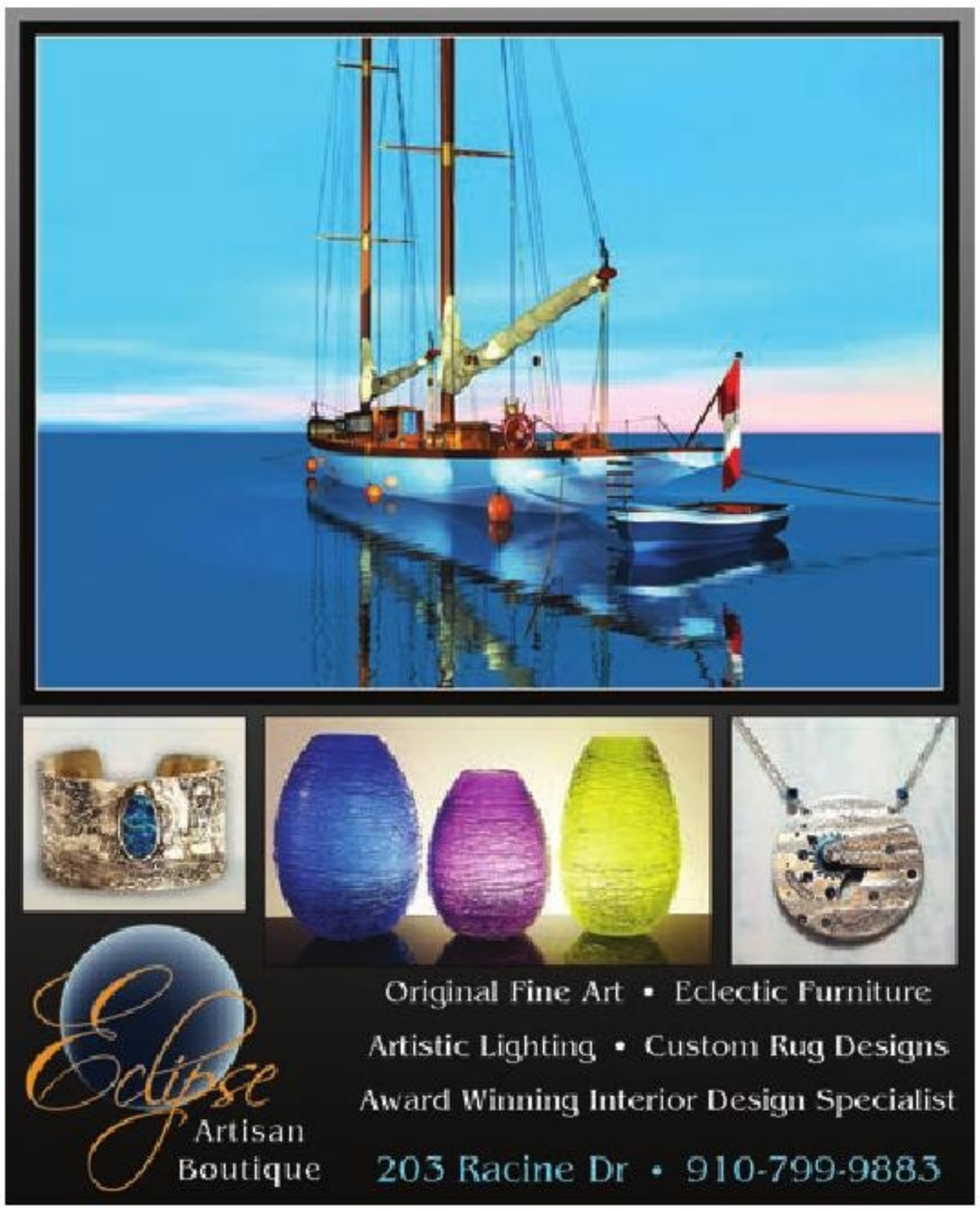
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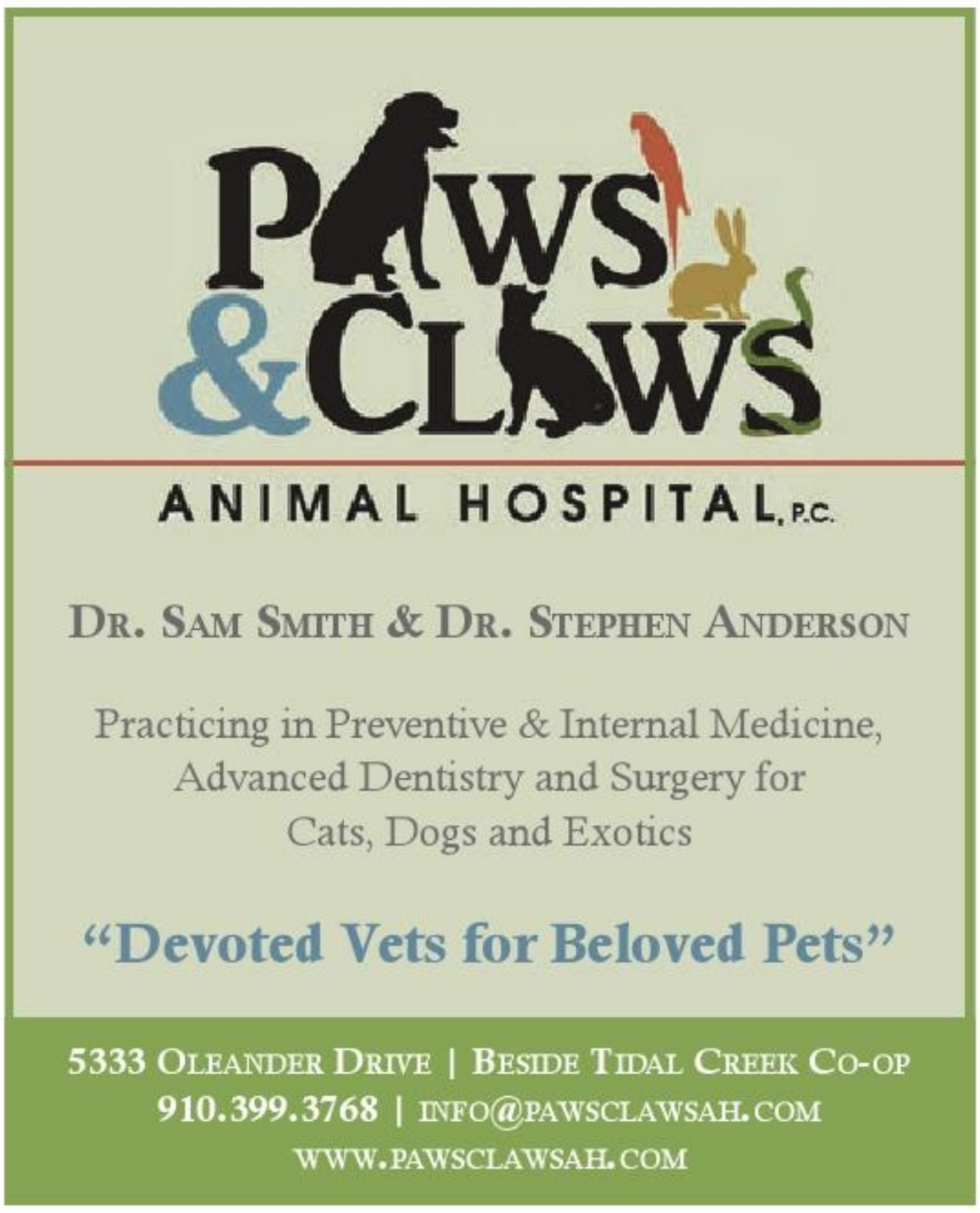
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feathers. They wait patiently on the limbs
of a dogwood tree — yellow finches,

titmice, and Carolina wrens — for the blue
threat to pass, to take their long, sharp
beaks and petulant squawks

to another location, preferably miles away,
leaving scattered seed and empty husks
behind them, the same way

an inconsiderate guest eats more
than his share of hors d'oeuvres, grinding
crumbs into the carpet on his way out.

– Terri Kirby Erickson

Burgwin-Wright Tells All!

Autobiography of a truly historic house

By Anne Barnhill · Photographs by Rick Ricozzi

Though it may seem odd to think of a house telling its story, after my almost 250 years of existence, I know anything is possible. Who might have guessed back in 1770, when I was first constructed, the colony of North Carolina, property of the king of England, would become a state, part of the United States of America? Who could have known horses and buggies would give way to automobiles? Who could have predicted the very slaves who lived in the quarters out back would become free, a war fought to make it so? Yes, I have seen much to astonish in my days. And I do like remembering.

John Burgwin is the gentleman who ordered my construction. What a man! Born in England, a second son who, as a result of his birth order had to make his own way in the world, the good fellow became a wealthy planter, merchant, justice of the peace, private secretary to Governor Dobbs, clerk of the Superior Court and member of the General Assembly. This small list does not name all of his accomplishments, but serves to show how successful and influential a man he was. I am proud to have been his home for a little over thirty years. Of course, I was merely one of many homes belonging to Burgwin — he owned a plantation on Goose Creek called The Hermitage and several other properties in the surrounding area, four plantations and seven homes in Wilmington alone. At the time of the American Revolution, Burgwin was able to walk the thin line between supporting England, the land of his birth, and supporting the Colonials. It helped that, because of a broken leg incurred while playing "Blind Man's Bluff" at a party, he had to leave for England on advice of his doctor. He returned to North Carolina around 1784 to become an American citizen and lived at The Hermitage until his death.

For some reason, Burgwin chose to build me on the remains of the old jail. You can still see the brick prison rooms, which make a sturdy basement. It was primarily a debtor's prison, and the poor men who were incarcerated for debt

lived exposed to the elements in the arched areas beneath my first floor. These criminals were punished by sun and rain as well as by the humiliation of being visible for anyone to see. But perhaps no one took notice of them; after all, there were also stocks in the yard, holding miscreants who could be pelted with rotten fruit or worse. And, across the creek running behind me, the gallows stood. I am happy I was not around to view such distasteful scenes.

While Burgwin was in England, I had a few adventures of my own. During the Revolutionary War, the famed British general, Cornwallis, used me as his headquarters. For years after, my nickname was "the Cornwallis house." Burgwin's business partner, Charles Jewkes, rented me during the time Burgwin was in England, raising his three children here. His stepson, Thomas Wright, purchased me from John Burgwin in 1799.

Dr. Henry Wright, son of Thomas, came into possession of me and made some changes to my exterior. My style has always been symmetrical, simple and elegant, in the Georgian style, which was quite popular in England and the United States for most of the eighteenth century. Henry Wright added a Palladian doorway and Ionic pilasters to my entranceway; he also added a south wing. His son, Dr. Adam Wright, was a surgeon in the Civil War and was the last Wright to live in the house.

The Civil War made use of my many rooms and commodious atmosphere as a kind of "sick bay" for soldiers before they were moved across the street to St. James Episcopal Church, which was being used as a hospital. Sadly, soldiers who were not expected to recover were cared for within my walls, too. Such duties were hard to bear, but I was happy to give those poor men a beautiful room in which to spend their last hours.

After the war, Dr. Wright sold me to William McRary and his wife, Martha. She lived here until 1907 and willed me to her sister, Rowena Wiggins, who lived here until 1930. After that, my condition deteriorated quickly. I had no indoor plumbing, no electricity and no occupant. A house cannot stand long under such conditions. Thankfully, a miracle occurred.

The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America got its start in 1891 and their goal is to preserve our Colonial heritage. The North Carolina Society was formed in 1894 in Wilmington and luckily for me, they wanted to save me from ruin. When they discovered I was for sale, they started raising money to purchase me. It took them seven years. But they weren't the only ones who desired my location; Standard Oil wanted to tear me down completely (yikes!) to put up a gas station. Another interested buyer wanted to disassemble me altogether and move me to New Jersey — *brrrr.* Thank heavens the Dames were able to secure me. Sadly, the purchase occurred during the Great Depression, when money was limited. I still had no running water or electricity.

Then came World War II.

The City of Wilmington wanted to use me as an officer's club for our men in uniform. They reached an agreement with the Dames, and I got running water and electricity — I had finally joined the twentieth century. And, given the romantic nature of young men going off to fight great battles, they added a "bride's room" which could be rented for a dollar, where lots of officers got married.

Now that I was a fit place in which to reside, the Dames made the 1845 addition their headquarters and began making me as authentic as possible. They commissioned Sam Hughes of

MacMillan, New York to create a furnishing plan and Henry Jay MacMillan to purchase the furniture from England. Since then, other items have been gathered from Europe as well as period pieces from the States. After all, John Burgwin spent a great deal of time in England and loved European furnishings, bringing many back for use in his properties in North Carolina. A few of my treasures are from former owners. For example, the original window above the front door was found stored in the basement. The Dames put it back where it belonged. What luck! In my cabinets, there is china from the owners. I'm very proud of my tea caddy, Oriental in style but made in England—Oriental was all the rage then. To have tea was to have wealth. Of course, bragging about one's success is still considered ill-mannered, as much then as now. So, John Burgwin displayed his status and success by having the ornate tea caddy, enough tea and sugar to share with friends—rich, indeed!

I hold many other treasures, from the jewelry found in the portrait of Carolyn Wright Strange to the gaming table complete with places for candlesticks. A walk through my halls is a walk through time. As the Colonial Dames envisioned, I became a museum open to the public in 1951.

Originally, I had several buildings surrounding me: a carriage house, post-1850; slave quarters, pre-1850; the old kitchen, and the "necessary" (outhouse might be the more common term these days). By the time the Dames purchased me, a noisy car lot had replaced the work yard. The Dames very much wanted to restore all my original property and, in 1971, they did so. It is then they decided to add the gardens and, if I must say so myself, they are my pride and joy.

Currently, Ms. Jocelyn Lynch is the gardener. She, along with Ms. Christine Lambert, take care of me inside and out. And wonderful guardians they are, each armed with a great deal of knowledge about Colonial America, and, more importantly, each filled with love for me, my time and my part in Wilmington's story.

After the Colonial Dames bought the car lot, they hired Alden Hopkins to design an eighteenth century garden for me. He knew what he was doing; after all, he had worked on the gardens in Williamsburg, Virginia. He said, "I have designed the garden in the spirit of the period of the house with the same elegance and grace shown in the architecture and in the furnishings. The plan is typical of the eighteenth century period and the plant material authentic and popular in that section of the Atlantic Seaboard." Sadly, Mr. Hopkins died before he could complete the garden, and Mr. Donald Parker, also of Williamsburg, presented the finished plans in 1970.

During Colonial times, boxwoods were frequently used to create patterns and walkways, much as they had been in England. Boxwoods do not do well in North Carolina, so we use yaupons instead. They look almost like boxwoods and make great hedges. Symmetrical paths were also quite stylish in the eighteenth century and we have replicated that look. Most of the paths are made of brick, though a few are gravel. Ms. Lynch has made use of old bricks, hand-made by slaves from Georgia, which are displayed in a flower pattern at points of interest. These bricks are eighteen inches tall and

also are used as a border for the flower gardens. I love having something from my own time right here in the garden.

There are seven distinct areas in my garden: the entrance; the orchard, which boasts fig and pomegranate trees — in the spring the orange blossoms of the pomegranates are beautiful; two terraces, one with tea roses and single roses; a dipping pool, which would have been in an eighteenth century garden to water the plants or the horses; a raised herb garden; a parterre garden (this was considered an extension of the home and often used for having tea or for courting); and a physic or medicinal garden.

Crepe myrtles line one side of the garden. In the 1700s, the berries from the myrtles were used to make candles. You can find such a variety of plants in my garden, from 65-year-old hollies to the trillium to the azaleas to the camellias. And, of course, there are the two magnolias in the front yard, both over 100 years old.

To add a bit of pizazz to the garden, Ms. Lynch has planted striking blue hydrangeas to attract the attention of passersby. Even though such flowers are not historical, they add interest and bring people in to stroll around and take in my beauty, if I call myself that without sounding immodest. Besides, I can't simply live in the past; I've learned that much in my 250 years. I need to change a little bit with the times — like being cool in summer and warm in winter. These are good adaptations, ones of which I am quite proud.

When I consider all the ways I could have been destroyed — by fire, by being razed to erect a gas station, by simply falling apart — I know I owe my very existence to the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America. Because they had the foresight to see what a treasure I am, and because of their love of American history, I am one of four remaining homes from the Colonial Age in Wilmington. And, because the Colonial Dames believe every American child should learn his or her heritage, each year, hundreds of fourth-graders from New Hanover schools roam my halls, giving me the gift of life and laughter.

So, come to see me when you get a chance. This spring, I promise my gardens will be luscious and I've had some work done inside, too. New paint refreshes my entranceway, and my floors have been restored to their original heart-of-pine color after having years of Victorian wax removed. I'm all sparkly and I can't wait to meet you.

Anne Clinard Barnhill is the author of four books, most recently the historical novel Queen Elizabeth's Daughter, *from St. Martin's Press. Last year, she was awarded a Regional Artist Grant from the Arts Council of Wilmington. Currently, she is working on a novel set in West Virginia in 1881.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW SHERMAN

The Beach Within

Water is the story of Richard Black's life – and the art of his Figure Eight Island home

By Ashley Wahl

Richard Black is sitting inside what feels like a very different beach house from the one he built at Figure Eight Island seventeen years ago.

"Virtually every fabric had sea life on it," says Black, a former yacht broker and lifelong outdoorsman whose laid-back demeanor makes it easy to imagine him exploring the surrounding marshes, content among the textures and colors of a coastal landscape.

Which is exactly what Paysage Home owner and designer Gigi Sireyjol-Horsley had in mind when she began working with Black to transform his 7,500-square-foot home into a cleaner, more polished version of itself — the beachgrass, the pastel sunsets, the eternal dance of water and light.

"The beach is already out there," says Gigi. "You don't need to put it in here."

And so, drawing from the cool, earthy palette just beyond the patio doors, she created a space that is every bit as natural and soothing as the uninterrupted view of the marsh. The effect is masterful. Subtle textures and solid colors complement the view beyond the window much in the way that a new harmony brightens a familiar melody. The flow is so seamless that it feels like a continuum.

But the first thing you will notice upon entering Richard Black's home is his exquisite art collection, starting with the hand blown glass chandelier in the foyer.

"It's not a Chihuly," says Black, although the piece does look like it might have come from the famous sculptor's colorful *Seaform* series (and, yes, there are Chihuly works displayed throughout). "You'll notice I love glass."

In fact, many of the rooms were designed around it.

"You will see pieces in this house that you will never see again," says Gigi, who started working with Black one year ago by helping him find replacements for the two living room rugs that were, as the homeowner puts it, "just covering up the floor."

Black gestures toward the lounging Retrievers, Red and R.J. (short for Red, Jr.), adding that the old rugs had been not so artfully "accented" by the dogs.

Gigi recalls feeling instantly struck by Black's art collection, which includes three Chihuly works, a Warhol, a Picasso pen and ink, a series of Claude Howell first prints, and a Victor Vasarely painting.

The interior was dated, says Gigi, and in some cases, Black's extensive art collection distracted from the surrounding landscape. Or maybe it was the other way around. Regardless, the house lacked a sense of balance with its environment and the homeowner's authentic style.

It was time for an upgrade.

"When I start a project," says the designer, her French accent as charming as her smiling brown eyes, "I usually try to find the thing that is going to create the 'wow.'"

But Richard Black already had the 'wow' in spades.

"The challenge was to work around his art," she says — to create the perfect backdrop for it. "It's a gift when you walk into a house like this and get to play at this level. I'm very fortunate to have had that chance."

She refers to the entire process as a beautiful collaboration.

"Richard had a lot of good ideas," says Gigi. "It was incredible to work with him."

From the Chihuly sea fans to the nautical-themed paintings that sing against gallery-like walls, Black's art offers a glimpse into his heart and soul: water is the story of his life.

Born in California, Black spent his boyhood summers sailing with his sport fishing grandfather at Newport Beach. In high school, he began working at a stained glass studio, where he spent a decade developing the craft.

"That's where I developed my love of glass," says Richard, who is seated in one of the contemporary swivel club chairs in the casual half of the living room. Neutral-colored sofa and bay window cushions are accented by pillows that echo the greens and yellows of the marsh, drawing the eyes instead to the lustrous purple glasswork on the center of the glass-top coffee table.

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF PAYSAGE HOME

A Greensboro girl (ex-wife) brought Black to North Carolina in 1993, and the Figure Eight Island beach house materialized some five years later.

"When I built this house, I wanted my kids to become water people too," says Black, explaining why he's never had a TV on display in the main living area. "I don't want it to be the focal point."

He picks up a framed photograph from a long-ago summer and smiles.

"This would be one of my greater accomplishments," he says, turning the photo toward his guest. "My three children and my brother's four children, all water skiing behind my little Mako. Seven at a time. Ninety horsepower."

The kids — now ages 23, 21 and 20 — were all competent boaters by the time they reached middle school. And like Black, they still love boating and fishing.

"That's kind of who I am," says Black.

While Gigi collaborated with Black to create an ambiance that accurately reflects his easygoing personality, she drew inspiration from a photo book that showcases Black's late father's Pacific Coast Highway home.

"I was not trying to replicate anything," says Gigi. "I was just trying to get a sense of where we wanted to go."

Mission accomplished.

In the den, debatably the most dramatic room on the main floor, a Tibetan chest that belonged to Black's father displays a glass sea fan trimmed in the same blue found in the massive oceanscape painting mounted on the grasscloth wallpaper above the sofa.

Of course, the dining room's quite a showstopper too.

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF PAYSAGE HOME

"Black's art offers a glimpse into his heart and soul: water is the story of his life."

"It was a big challenge for me to find the perfect chandelier," says Gigi of the aqua glass Regina-Andrews fixture hanging elegantly above the antique dining table.

Then there's the slate blue Phillip Jeffries newsprint wallpaper in the kitchen.

And the stair risers, painted blue to draw eyes up toward the Vasarely painting on the second floor.

Ditto the master suite, where soothing lavender walls and elegant wing chairs with rich purple leather backing complement the massive oak armoire that belonged to Black's father.

Gigi didn't touch the third-floor pinewood 'man room' festooned with waterfowl decoys and black-and-white photos of Black's grandfather.

Black casually mentions that his grandpa fished with the likes of Zane Grey and Ernest Hemingway. But then again, everything about Black is casual — even if he does like nice things.

As Black flips through the photo book of his father's home, artwork and sculptures, he comments on how the house was a perfect reflection of his dad.

"What makes me happy," says Gigi, "is when you walk into this house . . . it looks like Richard."

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF PAYSAGE HOME

Fussing Over Roses

An ancient bloom that bewitches rosarians to this day

By Barbara Sullivan · Photographs by Mark Steelman

Months ago, when temperatures hovered in the 30s and rose gardens slept in temporary desolation with rows of carefully pruned, leafless and thorny canes giving no hint of what lay waiting, a group of dedicated rosarians gathered to talk about their favorites — maybe it was the pure white 'Pope John Paul II', the flaming red 'Dolly Parton' or the floriferous yellow 'Julia Child' — and how this year they might try out a new soil formula or spray program or replace those weaklings that just weren't hacking it. In fact, for members of the Wilmington Cape Fear Rose Society (WCFRS) there is never an off-time from this passion. Their monthly get-togethers culminate in an annual garden tour (this year on May 7), where they and the public get a chance to look over new varieties in private gardens and admire the size and perfection of some of the old standbys. And, although the American Rose Society has been in existence almost 125 years and WCFRS itself began sixteen years ago, this whole process of fussing over and falling in love with roses, sometimes to the exclusion of all other worldly claims, is by no means a new phenomenon. It has consumed humans for thousands of years.

We know that the genus Rosa has been on the planet some 70 million years, with over 100 species occurring naturally — all in the Northern Hemisphere. These "species roses," as they are called, often produce simple, open-faced flowers with five petals and frothy clusters of stamens in the middle. Most bloom only once in the spring. In southeastern North Carolina, where winters tend to be mild and summers hot and humid, there are a number of species roses that do well for us. The pink Swamp rose (Rosa palustris) is one of our native plants. More often we will see two other species roses used extensively in public and private gardens. Both originating from China, these climbers bloom only once in the early spring and are virtually carefree in the garden. The first is the thornless Lady Banks rose (R. banksiae) with clusters of either pale yellow or creamy white, tightly-petaled flowers. The other favorite, the Cherokee rose (R. laevigata), is thorny with broad white open petals and a showy tassel of bright gold stamens in the center.

For many centuries humankind's love affair with the rose would have been restricted to these hundred-some naturally occurring species roses in shades of white, red, pink and yellow. We know that at least 5,000 years ago the Chinese were cultivating roses, and slightly later the Minoans in Crete were incorporating them into their jewelry designs and wall frescoes. A long line of civilizations, including the Phoenicians, Assyrians, Persians, Turks, Greeks, Egyptians and Europeans, celebrated the beauty of roses in their gardens, in their artwork, in their poetry, music and literature, and often used the flower as a symbol of what they valued most highly, whether it be love, beauty or religious purity.

Certainly throughout ancient times, the cultivation and trade of roses was widespread and lucrative. Ancient Assyrians, in addition to pillaging and plundering their neighbors' cities and towns in all directions, stopped to pick up plants along the way — most notably roses. Alexander the Great had a similar, one might say contradictory, ability to lay waste his enemies and appreciate their gardening prowess. He particularly admired Persian gardens and brought back with him the idea that Greeks might use plants, including roses, for decoration and not just for medicinal or culinary purposes. In ancient times, rose petals, when amassed in enormous quantities, went hand-in-hand with displays of extravagant wealth on the one hand and worshipful piety on the other. Wealthy Romans, for example, showed off by suspending baskets full of rose petals over the heads of their dinner guests, showering them with luxurious cascades at the appropriate moment. Cleopatra is said to have carpeted her floors eighteen inches deep in rose petals. Centuries later, when the Pantheon in Rome was converted to a church, thousands of rose petals were dropped from the oculus above.

Although in Greek and Roman times the rose was closely linked with mortal love, spring and erotic pleasure (being the flower associated with Aphrodite and Dionysus), it was fully embraced by both the Moslem and Christian faiths as a symbol of the highest faith and purity. Mohammed is said to have shed a drop of perspiration on his ascent to heaven, and where this fell, a rose grew up. The rose has been a symbol of the Virgin Mary and her union with God for many centuries.

All of this rose fervor at the highest levels of church and state led inevitably to an appetite for more and better varieties. Hybridizing occurred naturally and then, over time, with human intervention. Although practiced modestly for many centuries, hybridizing really took off in the latter part of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and has continued unabated from that point forward. We are now at a point where many thousands of varieties and cultivars are available to the average home gardener. Possibly, if the little-known General Alexandre de Beauharnais had done a better job of hanging onto the besieged

city of Mainz in 1793 against Prussia and its allies, we might not all be awash in so many choices today.

As it happens, General Beauharnais and his troops left Mainz in defeat, and through a series of twists of fate, a veritable rose bonanza ensued. For his failure, Beauharnais was marched to the guillotine, leaving behind a beautiful young widow named Josephine. She, in turn, caught the eye of one not-yet-famous Napoleon Bonaparte, married him and took the opportunity of his being out of the country on an army campaign to buy a run-down chateau and 150 acres at Malmaison, France, without his approval. Then she set to work creating one of the most magnificent gardens in Europe. Consumed with an almost obsessive passion for flowers — and especially for roses (she amassed over 250 rose varieties in fifteen years) — she soon gained the respect of all of Europe for her serious scientific dedication and her advances in horticulture. It is Josephine who is often credited with having started the nineteenth century passion for roses in Europe and America. This led to a kind of hybridizing frenzy that continues on to this day among rosarians around the world.

For modern day rose enthusiasts, by far the most popular garden roses are the hybrid teas, offspring of the sturdy hybrid perpetuals and the repeat-blooming tea roses. They offer long stems, large flowers, an extended bloom cycle and often a delicious scent. The downside for those who garden in our area is that hybrid teas are almost all prone to black spot. This is a disease which, if left unchecked, will produce leafless, sickly looking plants nothing like what the gardener was hoping for. Although organic controls like lime, sulfur, baking soda, vinegar, cow's milk and other home remedies may have a modest effect, they are not an equal match for black spot in our climate. The way most hybrid tea growers combat the disease is with a seven-to-ten-day spraying program of chemicals such as Bayer All-In-One (tebuconazole and imidacloprid), Funginex (triforine), Immunox (miclobutanil) or Banner Maxx (propiconazole), which all come with health warnings for humans and pets. Serious rose growers start spraying chemicals in early spring and continue on through fall.

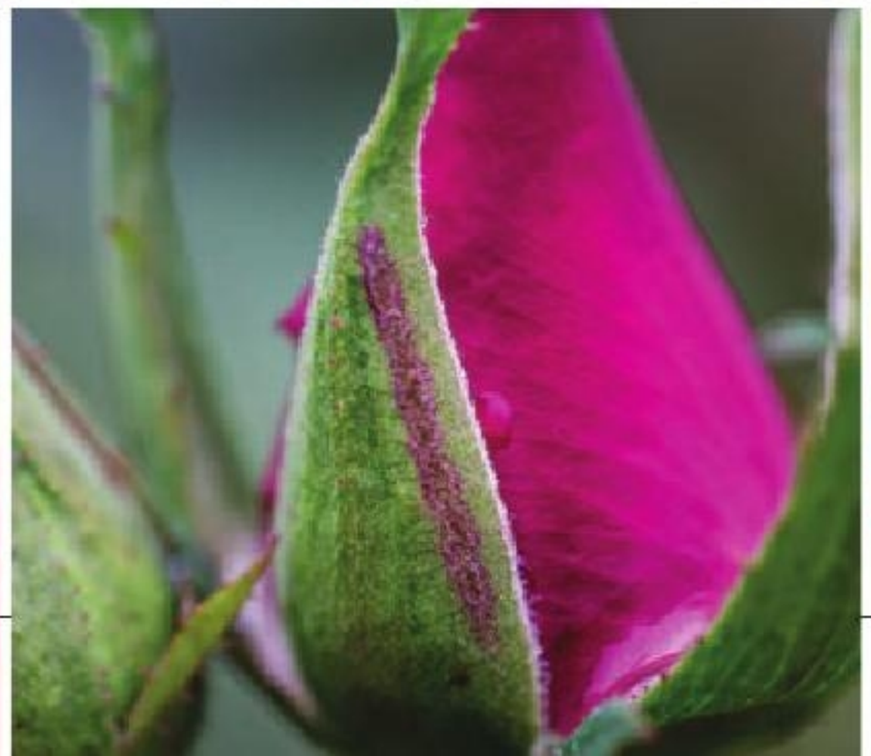
Some of the older varieties of garden roses such as China roses, Teas, Damasks, Musks, Gallicas, Noisettes, Rugosas as well as the new Knockout series, although not immune to black spot, show a high natural disease resistance and are a better choice for organic gardeners. Other tips for growing healthy roses in our area include planting them in raised beds in a mixture of garden soil and good organic material such as compost, peat moss, soil conditioner and/or manure; watering from below; allowing ample space between plants and removing any diseased leaves as soon as possible. Roses need a minimum of six hours of direct sunlight each day in order to thrive.

And whether you have personally grown 250 rose bushes, one rose bush or none, chances are you've given or received a rose as a token of affection. So, now, a modest proposal. We could reinstate the old Victorian custom of communicating complex sentiments via flowers rather than relying on the much less romantic vehicles of Twitter or Instagram. If you wanted, for example, to tell a woman she was beautiful, charming and ill-tempered, you could simply offer her a single, heavily perfumed musk rose and avoid all that sticky personal verbiage. And if, on the other hand, someone was making unwanted advances, the next time he or she handed you a flower, all you would have to do is accept it with your left hand and you would signal your lack of interest loud and clear. Finally, if you want people at your next board meeting to keep what is said in strict confidence, why not hang a rose from the ceiling so that it will all remain sub rosa?

In any case, it's a good bet that when Twitter and Instagram and even person-to-person board meetings are all relics of the past, the rose will not lose its allure. It will continue to be beloved as long as there are people around willing to appreciate its perfection. "Some people grumble that roses have thorns; I am grateful that thorns have roses." — Alphonse Karr.

Wilmington Cape Fear Rose Society's annual Rose Tour will be held on Saturday, May 7, from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Free and open to the public. For more information, visit WCFRS.blogspot.com

Barbara Sullivan is a regular contributor to Salt *and our favorite blooming expert.*



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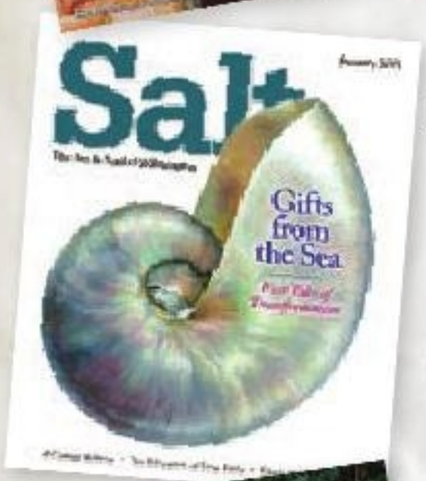

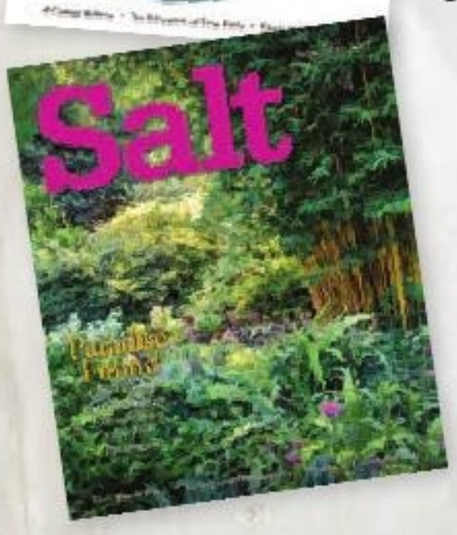

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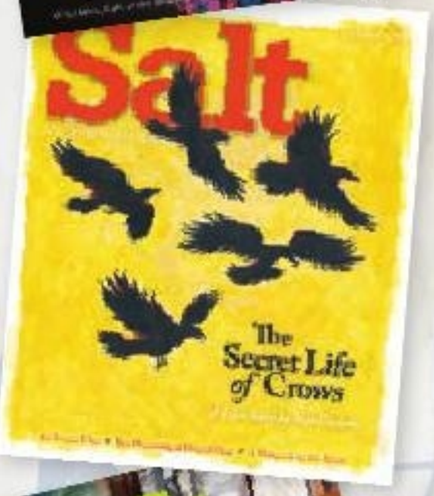
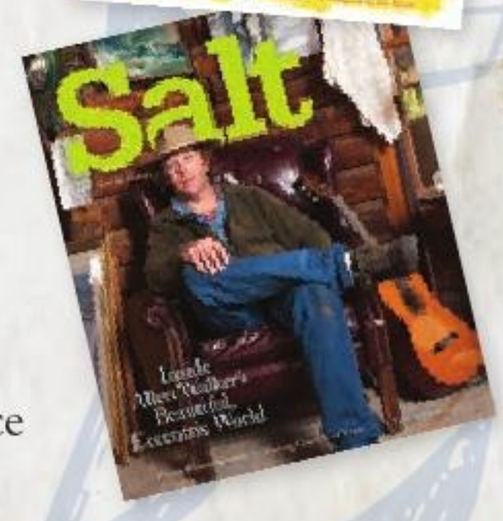




ALMANAC

May

By Rosetta Fawley

Strawberries First and Last

Hurray, it's strawberry season! The warm spring will have sprung the red fruit a little earlier this year. Don't miss them.

The strawberry is of great import in ancient Cherokee legend. The First Woman and the First Man of the Turtle Island lived at first in perfect harmony, but like most couples they soon fell to arguing. The First Woman stormed off in a fit of rage, and the First Man despaired of his ability to bring her home. He appealed to the Creator for help. Upon hearing of the First Man's devotion, the Creator set plants growing in the First Woman's path to slow her down.

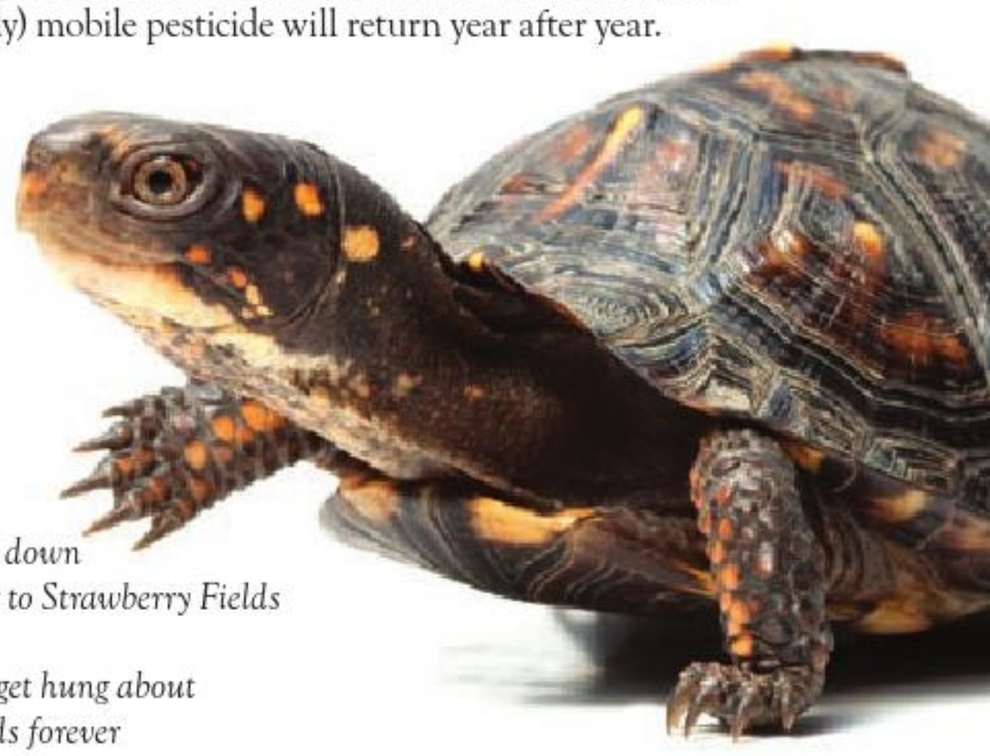
Blackberries grew up on one side of the path, huckleberries on the other, but she ignored them. The Creator sent gooseberries and serviceberries to line the First Woman's way, but still she walked on. Finally, the Creator threw down a great handful of strawberry plants. The beauty of the plants and berries stopped the First Woman in her tracks. She was distracted from her anger and bent down to try a strawberry. It was so delicious she forgot how cross she was with the First Man and began to gather the strawberries. Wanting to share them with him, she returned to the First Man and led him back to their home, feeding him the fruit on the way.

Aside from eating them straight from the plant, here's the Almanac's favorite way with strawberries: Wash and hull your strawberries — about a quart if you like a measurement, but really this recipe is highly elastic, it's all to taste — and throw them into a blender. Squeeze half a lemon and half a lime over them, and, if you would like, add sugar to taste. Whizz up the mixture in the blender, pour it into a bowl and freeze overnight if you have the patience. If you can't wait you can just drink it down as a sort of chilled dessert soup. Or pour in a good slosh of rum and some triple sec and you've got yourself a strawberry daiquiri. Happy spring.

A fair maid who, the first of May
Goes to the fields at break of day
And washes in dew from the hawthorn tree
Will ever after handsome be.
– Traditional English rhyme

Turtles in the Garden

Box turtles are very fond of strawberries, and if you're growing them in your garden you might want to let the turtles share the fruit with you — box turtles are also very fond of eating garden pests, particularly slugs. So make them welcome with a damp shady area of leaf litter, where they can take a siesta during the hotter part of the day. If your garden is particularly hospitable you may be lucky enough to have your herpetological friend lay her eggs there. If she does, keep an eye on the nest and be ready to cover it with a little chicken wire to keep out predators. Put away the herbicides and pesticides, and your own (slowly) mobile pesticide will return year after year.



Let me take you down
Cause I'm going to Strawberry Fields
Nothing is real
And nothing to get hung about
Strawberry Fields forever

From "Strawberry Fields Forever," Lennon-McCartney, 1967.

"By the time one is eighty, it is said, there is no longer a tug of war in the garden with the May flowers hauling like mad against the claims of the other months. All is at last in balance and all is serene. The gardener is usually dead, of course."
— Henry Mitchell, *The Essential Earthman*, 1981

Arts Calendar

Cape Fear Cannon Ball

5/5

Big Something Concert

5/7

Anniversary Celebration

5/7

5/1 **Boogie in the Park**
5–7 p.m. Tyler Barham kicks off this summer concert series with country hits. Bring blankets and snacks. Free. Ocean Front Park, 105 Atlantic Avenue, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8216 or www.townofkurebeach.org.

5/1 **NC Symphony Concert**
7:30 p.m. Season finale concert featuring Beethoven's *Violin Concerto* and John Adams' *Absolute Jest*. Pre-concert talk begins at 6:30 p.m. Admission: $26–71. CFCC Humanities & Fine Arts Center, 701 North Third Street, Wilmington. Info: www.ncsymphony.org.

5/1–4 & 8–11 **Jewish Film Festival**
7 p.m. Award-winning feature films and selected shorts offering unique perspectives on Jewish identity, customs, rituals, history and contemporary global politics. Admission: $7–15. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: www.wilmingtonjff.org.

5/2 **Art Exhibition Opening**
10 a.m. – 2 p.m. *Saved! Historic Wilmington Preservation: A Fresh Perspective*. New Hanover County Schools' art student smartphone photography exhibition features nearly 100 original works by Laney, New Hanover and Ashley High School students inspired by historic preservation. Open through 5/13. Hannah Block Community Arts Center, 120 South Second Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 341-7860 or www.wilmingtoncommunityarts.org.

5/2 **Spring Garden Tea**
11 a.m. & 2 p.m. Spring tea in the mansion parlors. Reservations required. Admission: $37.45. Bellamy Mansion, 503 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-3700 or www.bellamymansion.org.

5/2 **Word Weavers**
7–9 p.m. Christian writers' group meeting. Life Point Church, 3534 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 619-7344 or sondradron@bellsouth.net.

5/3 & 4 **Musical Theater**
7:30 p.m. Experience the hit Broadway musical *Mamma Mia!* Music by ABBA. Admission: $45–95. CFCC Humanities & Fine Arts Center, 701 North Third Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 362-7999 or cfcc.edu/capefearstage.

5/5 **Bird Walk & Plant Sale**
9–11 a.m. (bird talk & walk); 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (plant sale). Meet at Dry Street Pub & Pizza to learn about the painted bunting, then check out the native plant sale held outside of Wild Bird & Garden, 105 East Brown Street, Southport. Info: (910) 457-9453 or www.wildbirdgarden-inc.com.

5/5 **Opening Reception**
6–9 p.m. Artwork from the Plein Air Paint Out (held during the Azalea Garden Tour) on display. Includes refreshments and live music. The Forum, Spectrum Art & Jewelry, 1125 Military Cutoff Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 256-2323 or www.spectrumartandjewelry.com.

5/5 **Cape Fear Cannon Ball**
8 p.m. The Cape Fear Pirate Club presents an evening of roots music and bluegrass with Chatham County Line and The Midatlantic. Admission: $23–35. Brooklyn Arts Center, 516 North Fourth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-2939 or 2016cannonball.eventbrite.com.

5/6 **Presentation & Book Signing**
5 p.m. Mary Alice Monroe presents her new novel, *A Lowcountry Wedding*. Book signing to follow. Silver Coast Winery, 6680 Barbeque Road NW, Ocean Isle Beach. Info: (910) 287-2800.

5/6 **Art Show & Sale**
6 p.m. The Disability Resource Center's Art Show & Sale. Half of the proceeds benefit the artists; half benefit the center and its mission to empower people with disabilities. Free. Community Arts Center, 120 South Second Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 815-6618 or www.drc-cil.org.

5/6 **Airlie Concert**
6–8 p.m. Signal Fire (reggae) kicks off this summer concert series. Food and wine available for purchase. Admission: $2–9. Airlie Gardens, 300 Airlie Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 457-9453 or www.airliegardens.org.

5/6 **Night Tour**
8 p.m. Tour the Burgwin-Wright house by candlelight as costumed interpreters reveal the rituals and superstitions of years past. Admission: $10. Burgwin-Wright House, 224 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-0570 or www.burgwinwrighthouse.com.

St. Paul & The Broken Bones

5/14

5/6 & 7 — Pender County Spring Fest
6–10 p.m. (Friday); 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Saturday). Homegrown, handmade festival featuring food, music and dancing, arts and crafts, children's activities, area vendors and all-day entertainment. Pender Couty Courthouse Square, 100 South Wright Street, Burgaw. Info: (910) 259-4844 or www.visitpender.com/calendarofevents.

5/6–8 — Wine & Food Festival
7–10 p.m. (Friday); 2– 5 p.m. (Saturday); 1–4 p.m. (Sunday). Epicurean festival hosted by Bellamy Mansion and Bacchus Brood. Sample wine and beer plus tasty bites from local restaurants, caterers and food trucks. Bellamy Mansion, 503 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 202-4749 or www.wilmingtonwineandfood.com.

5/7 — Teacher Trot
8 a.m. 5K and 1-mile fun run to support staff and student wellness in New Hanover County Schools. Admission: $10–30. Ashley High School, 555 Halyburton Memorial Parkway, Wilmington. Info: (919) 302-4393 or its-go-time.com/new-hanover-teacher-trot.

5/7 — River–to–Sea Bike Ride
8:30 a.m. Twenty-mile bicycle ride from downtown Wilmington to Wrightsville Beach and back on the Port City's River-to-Sea Bicycle Route. All ages welcome; helmets required. Free. Bailey Theatre Park, 12 North Front Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 341-0107 or www.rivertoseabikeway.com.

Historical Cemetery Tour

5/21

5/7 — Story Extravaganza
9 a.m. Storytelling festival for kids featuring Mr. Scooter, Beth Peddle, Memory Land Comics, Jamie Schrum, No Sleeves Magic and Jocelyn Beam-Walson. The Dance Element performs to a soundtrack by the Philadelphia Orchestra narrated by David Bowie. Other activities include a baby obstacle course, story walk, Children's Museum activity station and free comic books. Free. Northeast Regional Library, 1241 Military Cutoff Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-6393 or www.nhclibrary.org.

5/7 — Butterfly Workshop & Plant Sale
9:15–10:30 a.m. (workshop); 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. & 2–4 p.m. (plant sale). Learn about one of our area's most vibrant songbirds, the Eastern bluebird, and how to attract them to your yard. Afterward, Slatestone Gardens and My Garden Plants Company will hold a native plant sale. Free. Wild Bird & Garden, 3501 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-6001 or www.wildbirdgardeninc.com.

5/7 — Pop-Up Market
10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Indoor/outdoor market filled with upcycled, recycled and repurposed furniture and home décor items, salvage pieces, yard and garden décor, jewelry and local honey. Location: 1987 Andrew Jackson Highway (Hwy 74/76), Leland. Info: www.seaglasssalvagemarket.com.

5/7 — Landmark House Tours
10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Then, When and Wow! – HWF's 50 Fantastic Years – A Walking Tour. Landmark house tours presented by the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society include admittance into the Latimer House, Bellamy Mansion and the Burgwin-Wright House. Tours depart from the corner of Third and Orange Street and include trolley rides and a lunch catered by Jester's Café in the Latimer House tearoom. Admission: $28/tour; $10/lunch. Various locations in downtown Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-0492 or www.lcfhs.org.

Willie Nelson in Concert

5/24

5/7 — Preservation Art Exhibition
10 a.m. – 2 p.m. *Rewinding the Past: Opening the Doors of Preservation for the Future*. Gregory Elementary School art students artfully re-purposed five-panel wood doors supplied by Historic Wilmington Foundation's Legacy Architectural Salvage. Doors will be auctioned at 6 p.m. New Elements Gallery, 201 Princess Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-8897 or www.newelementsgallery.com.

5/7 — Hunting for History
10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Test your powers of observation with clever clues (for adults) and an easy-to-find primer (for kids). Prizes awarded to the first 25 participants. Free. Children's Museum of Wilmington, 116 Orange Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 254-3534 or www.playwilmington.org.

5/7 — Hands on History
10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Hands-on activities at the Children's Museum for ages 10 and up in celebration of National Preservation Month. Free. Children's Museum

of Wilmington, 116 Orange Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 254-3534 or www.playwilmington.org.

5/7 Rose Garden Tour
10 a.m. – 4 p.m. The Wilmington Cape Fear Rose Society's annual rose garden tour. Free. NHC Arboretum, 6206 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: www.wcfrs.blogspot.com.

5/7 A Day on the Oleander Express
10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Friends of the Arboretum present a fun-filled day of adventure with interactive and educational stops around the gardens. Featuring the Shriner's Choo-choo, model trains from Wilmington Railroad Museum, Trolley Stop hotdogs, craft beers and more. Passports included. Admission: $10 (free for ages 2 and under). NHC Arboretum, 6206 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-7660 or nhcarboretum.org.

5/7 Derby 4 Dogs
4–7 p.m. Charity event hosted by Paws4People to raise awareness and funds to train assistance dogs. Event includes cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, silent auction and coverage of the Kentucky Derby. Admission: $53.74. Porters Neck Country Club, 8403 Vintage Club Drive, Wilmington. Info: www.p4pderby16.eventbrite.com.

5/7 Run for the Roses
5K through Abbey Nature Preserve in anticipation for Poplar Grove's Kentucky Derby Party. Discounted tickets for the party available. Poplar Grove Plantation, 10200 US Highway 17 North, Wilmington. Info: (910) 686-9518 or www.poplargrove.org.

5/7 Kentucky Derby Party @ Poplar Grove
4–8 p.m. Kentucky Derby-themed fundraising event featuring televised race coverage, horseshoes, mint juleps, Southern fare, silent auction, live music, big hats and garden party attire. Admission: $50. Proceeds benefit Poplar Grove's Animal Sanctuary. Poplar Grove Plantation, 10200 US Highway 17 North, Wilmington. Info: (910) 686-9518 or www.poplargrove.org.

5/7 Kentucky Derby Party
5–8 p.m. Derby-themed party featuring coverage of the Kentucky Derby, hors d'oeuvres by Bon Appetit, live music by Massive Grass, an Audi raffle and the launch of the Wilmington Symphony's 2016–17 season. Admission: $45. Proceeds benefit the Wilmington Symphony Orchestra. Coastline Convention Center, 501 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 791-9262 or www.wilmingtonsymphony.org/kentucky-derby-party.html.

5/7 Women of Achievement Awards
5:30–9 p.m. Fundraiser for the Lower Cape Fear YWCA honoring the accomplishments of women and young leaders in the Port City. Includes social hour, refreshments and award ceremony. Wilmington Convention Center, 515 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 799-6820 or www.ywca-lowercapefear.org.

5/7 Concert @ Greenfield Lake
6 p.m. Big Something performs a fusion of rock, pop and funk. Admission: $15–20. Greenfield Lake Amphitheater, 1941 Amphitheater Drive. Info: (910) 343-3614 or greenfieldlakeamphitheater.com.

5/7 Art Auction
6–8 p.m. En Plein Air Art Auction and cocktail reception featuring iconic works by locally recognized artists Betty Brown and Janet Triplett, plus salvaged and artfully repurposed five-panel doors by Gregory Elementary School. New Elements Gallery, 201 Princess Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-8997 or newelementsgallery.com.

5/7 Movie in the Park
Starts at sunset. Family-friendly movie screening of *Minions* (2015, PG, 91 min.). Blankets, chairs and picnics welcome. Free. Leland Municipal Park, 102 Town Hall Drive. Info: (910) 332-4814 or www.townofleland.com/recreation-events.

5/7 Ladies of Laughter
7:30 p.m. Each year the Ladies of Laughter hold a comic competition for the best emerging female comedians in the country. The finalists of this contest take the Mainstage for a night of laughs. Admission: $22–40. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

5/8 Mother's Day Brunch
12 p.m. Mother's Day brunch with Grenoldo Frazier. TheatreNOW, 19 South Tenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-3669 or theatrewilmington.com.

5/9 Symphony Golf Classic
8 a.m. Annual golf tournament/fundraiser hosted by the Wilmington Symphony. Registration includes breakfast and snacks, luncheon and awards ceremony. Admission: $386.55. Proceeds benefit the Wilmington Symphony Orchestra and its youth education programs. Eagle Point Golf Club, 8131 Bald eagle Lane, Wilmington. Info: (910) 791-9262 or www.wilmington-symphony.org/golf-classic.html.

5/10 Over Fifties Dance Club
7:30–10 p.m. DJs Gary Richardson and Buddy Langley will play a variety of dance music for the Over Fifties Dance Club. Couples and singles welcome. Bring a snack and drink. Admission: $8. New Hanover County Senior Center, 2222 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 620-8427 or www.overfiftiesdanceclub.org.

5/11 Airlie Bird Hike
8–9:30 a.m. Join Wild Bird & Garden for a bird hike through Airlie Gardens. Admission: $5–9. Airlie Gardens, 300 Airlie Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-7700 or www.airliegardens.org.

5/11 Nesta Fest
7 p.m. – 1:30 a.m. The Rusty Nail celebrates the legacy of Robert Nesta Marley and reggae music with performances by Fyah Niceness, Rickey Starr, Ashanti Selassie, Cayenne King, Signal Fire, Give Thanks Band and more. Also features DJ I Dread plus a 20-minute preview screening of Wilmington on Fire. Admission: $10. The Rusty Nail, 1310 South Fifth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 231-8818 or www.facebook.com/events/174649536240525.

5/12 The Hit Men
4 & 7:30 p.m. The Hit Men, former stars of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons. Admission: $22–40. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

5/12 Jazz at the Mansion
6:30–8:30 p.m. The New Hanover High School Jazz Band kicks off this summer concert series on the Bellamy lawn. Beer and wine cash bar on site. Admission: $12. Bellamy Mansion, 503 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-3700 or www.bellamymansion.org.

5/13 Disabled Fishing Tournament
7:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. Got-Em-On Live Bait Club provides a day of fishing, food and fun for those with disabilities. Awards ceremony follows. Free. Kure Beach Fishing Pier, 100 Atlantic Avenue, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 612-3407 or www.got-em-on.com.

5/13–15 Greek Festival
11 a.m. – 10 p.m. (Friday & Saturday); 11 a.m. – 7 p.m. (Sunday). Annual festival celebrating the culture, faith and heritage of the Greek community. Authentic food, music, dancing, church tour, cultural presentations, souvenirs, cooking demos and a Greek-style marketplace. Proceeds benefit the St. Nicolas Greek Orthodox Church and other local charities. St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, 608 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 394-4444 or www.stnicholasgreekfest.com.

5/14 Boating Course
8 a.m. – 5 p.m. The Cape Fear Sail & Power Squadron presents its comprehensive boating course. A four-hour teaching cruise with Wilmington Water Tours will follow on 5/22. Admission: $80. CFCC, 411 North Front Street, Wilmington. Info: capefearboatingcourse.org.

5/14 I Love Lungs Walk
9 a.m. A walk in celebration of World Asthma Day featuring WECT News Meterologist Lauren Rautenkranz. Donations benefit the American Lung Association in North Carolina. Free. Hugh MacRae Park (Shelters 4 & 5), 314 Pine Grove Drive, Wilmington. Info: (413) 335-3937 or www.crowdrise.com/ilovelungswilmingtonwalk2016/fundraiser.

5/14 Crawl for Paws
2 p.m. Pub crawl to help raise funds for the Carolina Beach Police Department K9 unit and other local animal charities. Various Pubs in Carolina Beach. Info: www.crawlforpaws.com.

5/14 Native Plant Sale
2–4 p.m. Duane Truscott of My Garden Plants Company will be on hand with a variety of native plants for sale. Wild Bird & Garden, 3501 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-6001 or www.wildbirdgardeninc.com.

5/14 Ortho Wilmington 5K
8 a.m. 5K that benefits and celebrates the achievements of the boys and girls in Girls on the Run and STRIDE of Coastal Carolina. This is a qualifying event for the N.C. Senior Games. Admission: $15. Port City Community Church, 250 Vision Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-9622 or www.sportoften.com/event/28179/orthowilmington-5k.

5/14 Battleship Program
1–4 p.m. Battleship North Carolina presents "Showboats: Systems & Design", a presentation by Lt. Colonel Ken Rittenmeyer (USAF retired) followed by a two-hour exploration with explanations of shipboard systems like armor, fuel, propulsion and more. Admission: $35–40. Battleship NC, 1 Battleship Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-5797 or www.battleshipnc.com.

5/14 State Park Celebration
2 p.m. Celebrate NC State Park's 100th anniversary plus the 47th anniversary of Carolina Beach State Park. Enjoy guest speakers and static displays on the history of NC parks before heading out on a ranger-led hike to view the park's world-famous Venus Flytraps. Free. Carolina Beach State Park, 1010 State Park Road, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-8206 or www.ncparks.gov/carolina-beach-state-park.

5/14 Raise the Barn
6–9 p.m. Join Feast Down East for the farm-to-table event

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of the year. NHC Arboretum, 6206 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: www.feastdowneast.org.

5/14 Concert @ Greenfield Lake
7 p.m. Soul band St. Paul & The Broken Bones perform live at Greenfield Lake. Admission: $28–32. Greenfield Lake Amphitheater, 1941 Amphitheater Drive. Info: (910) 343-3614 or greenfieldlakeamphitheater.com.

5/15 Southern Exposure
12–6 p.m. Photographic arts show and sale presented by Kelly Starbuck Photography featuring 40 regional artists. Local food trucks and cash bar on site. Admission: $5. Brooklyn Arts Center, 516 North Fourth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-2939 or www.brooklynartsnc.com.

5/15 Choral Society Concert
4 p.m. *Wade in the Water: A Tribute to Wilmington*. The program, led by Paula Brinkman, includes "Blue Skies" and "How Deep is the Ocean" by Irving Berlin, the Gershwin brothers' iconic "Summertime", spirituals "Deep River" and "Wade in the Water" and more. Admission: $5–12. CFCC Humanities & Fine Arts Center, 701 North Third Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 362-7999 or cfcc.edu.

5/15 Boogie in the Park
5–7 p.m. Rebekah Todd & The Odyssey (rock/blues/soul). Bring blankets and snacks. Free. Ocean Front Park, 105 Atlantic Avenue, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8216 or www.townofkurebeach.org.

5/16 Lecture
7:30 p.m. Elaine Henson takes a look at bathing suits through vintage advertising from 1910 to the 1960s. Free. Federal Point History Center, 1121 A North Lake Park Boulevard, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-0502 or www.federalpointhistory.org.

5/18 Southport Bird Walk
8:30–9:30 a.m. A bird walk around Southport's historic district and waterfront. Free. Wild Bird & Garden, 105 East Brown Street, Southport. Info: (910) 457-9453 or www.wildbirdgardeninc.com.

5/18 Concert @ Greenfield Lake
6 p.m. Acoustic folk bands Trampled by Turtles and The Devil Makes Three. Admission: $30–40. Greenfield Lake Amphitheater, 1941 Amphitheater Drive. Info: (910) 343-3614 or greenfieldlakeamphitheater.com.

5/18–21 Cape Fear Comedy Festival
Four-day independently run live comedy festival featuring stand-up, sketch and improv performances by comedians from all over the U.S. and Canada. See website for schedule and venue details. Info: (910) 409-1262 or capefearcomedy.com.

5/19 Preservation Awards
6–8 p.m. The Historic Wilmington Foundation recognizes and honors the businesses and individuals who make preservation a reality in our area. New Hanover County Courthouse, 316 Princess Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-2511 or www.historicwilmington.org.

5/19–29 Live Theatre
7:30 p.m. (Thursday – Saturday); 3 p.m. (Sunday). Thalian Association presents Michael Frayn's *Noises Off*. Admission: $15–30. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

5/20 Airlie Concert
6–8 p.m. Boba Funk (fun and R&B). Food and wine available for purchase. Admission: $2–9. Airlie Gardens, 300 Airlie Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 457-9453 or www.airliegardens.org.

5/20 & 21 Spring Paint Out
10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Watch local artists capture the beauty of the gardens at the Burgwin-Wright house en plein air. Works will be available for purchase; spectators are encouraged to vote for their favorite for the People's Choice Award. Free. Burgwin-Wright House, 224 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-0570 or www.burgwin-wrighthouse.com.

5/20–22 SilverArts Art Show & Sale
10 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Friday & Saturday); Noon – 4 p.m. (Sunday). Statewide juried art competition for artists age 50 and older featuring the visual arts, heritage arts, literary arts and performing arts. The ArtWorks, 200 Willard Street, Wilmington. Info: Wilmington-art.org.

5/20–22 Rims on the River
Vintage car, hot rod and motorcycle show featuring live entertainment, pre-show parties, vendor exhibits, a cruise day and awards. See website for schedule. Riverfront Park, North Water Street, Wilmington. Info: www.rimsontheriver.com.

5/20–22 Seaglass Salvage Market
9 a.m. – 3 p.m. (Friday); 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Saturday); 12–5 p.m. (Sunday). Once a month indoor/outdoor market filled with up-cycled, recycled and repurposed furniture and home décor items, salvage pieces, yard and garden décor, jewelry and local honey. Location: 1987 Andrew Jackson Highway (Hwy 74/76), Leland. Info: www.seaglasssalvagemarket.com.

5/21 Pier to Pier Swim
9 a.m. 1.7-mile race in the water between Johnny Mercers Pier and the Crystal Pier. Admission: $40. Crystal Pier, 703 South Lumina Avenue, Wrightsville Beach. Info: www.stokedtogoout.com/swim.

5/21 Butterfly & Plant Program
9:15–10:30 a.m. Join Airlie Gardens Environmental Educator Jennifer O'Keefe for a program on the relationship between native plants and butterflies. Free. Wild Bird & Garden, 3501 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-6001 or www.wildbirdgardeninc.com.

5/21 Historical Cemetery Tour
10 a.m. – 12 p.m. A two-hour historical tour of Oakdale Cemetery led by local historian Ed Gibson. Admission: $10. Oakdale Cemetery, 520 North Fifteenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-5682 or oakdalecemetery.org.

5/21 Plantpalooza
10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Locally grown native plants and heirloom vegetables for sale, plus various micro-workshops throughout the day. Wild Bird & Garden, 3501 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-6001 or www.wildbirdgardeninc.com.

5/21 Street Arts Festival
10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Interactive arts festival at Carolina Beach celebrating visual, culinary and performing arts with vendor shops, interactive demos, educational programs, community art projects, food and live entertainment. Free. Cape Fear Boulevard, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-7822 or www.cbstreetartsfestival.org.

5/21 Kids Walk
Family-friendly walk around Greenfield Lake that teaches kids how to give back while raising funds and awareness for child homelessness. Includes food, drinks, face painting, crafts and learning activities for kids. Admission: $10. Greenfield Lake Park, 1702 Burnett Boulevard, Wilmington. Info: (910) 763-4424x113 or goodshepherd-wilmington.org.

5/21 JDRF Hope Gala
6 p.m. – 12 a.m. Black tie fundraiser for the Junior Diabetes Research Foundation Fund A Cure, cocktails, gourmet dinner, live music, dancing and silent and live auctions. Admission: $200. Wilmington Convention Center, 515 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: jdrf.org/coastalcarolina/events/2016-jdrf-hope-gala/.

5/21 Movie in the Park
Starts at sunset. Family-friendly movie screening of *Inside Out* (2015, PG, 95 min.). Blankets, chairs and picnics welcome. Free. Leland Municipal Park, 102 Town Hall Drive. Info: (910) 332-4814 or www.townofleland.com/recreation-events.

5/24 Willie Nelson in Concert
7 p.m. With a career spanning six decades and more than 200 albums, Willie Nelson has earned nearly every award and honor available in his profession. See him live. Admission: $72–99. Greenfield Lake Amphitheater, 1941 Amphitheater Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-3614 or huka.com.

5/25 Birding Kayak Adventure
8 a.m. Join Wild Bird & Garden and Mahanaim Adventures for a special birding and kayaking day at the Hammocks Beach State Park. Equipment and guide services included. Admission: $90. Wild Bird & Garden, 3501 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-6001 or www.wildbirdgardeninc.com.

5/25 Page to Stage
6:30 p.m. Every fourth Wednesday, writers, actors and producers share original works of comedy and drama with the community and encourage feedback. Free; donations appreciated. Cameron Art Museum, Weyerhaeuser Reception Hall, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

5/26 Book Talk
11 a.m. *The Mystical Magical Amazing Fantastical Gardens of Airlie*, a children's book told in rhyme about historic Airlie Gardens. Admission: $5–15. Latimer House, 126 South Third Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-0492 or www.lcfhs.org.

5/26 Wilma Dash
6:30 p.m. All-female 5K hosted by *Wilma* magazine. Health Fest and afterparty to follow. Admission: $35–50. Proceeds benefit Pretty in Pink. Coastline Convention Center, 503 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: (919) 302-4393 or its-go-time.com/Wilma-dash.

5/26–30 Battleship Crew Reunion
1 p.m. The USS *North Carolina* Battleship Association's annual reunion for the Battleship's crew and their families. Reunion activities are open only to those registered for the events. Battleship NC, 1 Battleship Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-5797 or www.battleshipnc.com/Events/CrewReunion.

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CHANCE
Oil pastel and collage, 24" x 24"
by Elizabeth Darrow

SMALL RAKU VASE
7" H x 6" diam
by Traudi Thornton

SEAGRAPE LEAF
Fine-Art Print, 12" x 12"
by Susan Francy

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5/27 Amusement Park Opening
5–11 p.m. Seasonal opening of Carolina Beach's seaside amusement park. Food, games, carnival rides, live music, fireworks and family-friendly entertainment. Carolina Beach Boardwalk, 100 Cape Fear Boulevard, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-8434 or www.pleasureislandnc.org.

5/27 Downtown Sundown
6–10 p.m. Free downtown concert series overlooking the Cape Fear River. Band line-up available online. Parking lot at the corner of Princess & Water Streets, Wilmington. Info: (910) 763-7349 or www.downtownsundown.

5/27 Fourth Friday
6–9 p.m. Downtown galleries, studios and art spaces open their doors to the public in an after-hours celebration of art and culture. Free. Various venues in Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-0998 or www.artscouncilofwilmington.org.

5/28 Carz Under the Starz
3–8 p.m. Car show hosted by Sun Coast Cruisers open to cars and trucks from 1991 or older. Features dash plaques, awards and a 50/50 raffle to benefit Step Up for Soldiers. Admission: $15–20 to register. Chili's Grill & Bar, 819 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: www.facebook.com/backtothebeach.

5/28 Carolina Beach Farmers' Market
8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Outdoor "island-style" market featuring live music and local growers, producers and artisans selling fresh local produce, wines, meats, baked goods, herbal products and handmade crafts. Carolina Beach Lake Park, Highway 421 & Atlanta Avenue, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-2977 or www.carolinabeachfarmersmarket.com.

5/28 Battleship Alive
8 a.m. – 5 p.m. The Living History Crew provides insight into the daily life and routine of the crew aboard the USS *North Carolina*. Admission: $6–14. Battleship NC, 1 Battleship Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-5797 or www.battleshipnc.com.

5/28 Hummingbird Program
9:15–10:30 a.m. Learn all about hummingbirds and how to attract them to your yard. Free. Wild Bird & Garden, 3501 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-6001 or www.wildbirdgardeninc.com.

5/28 & 29 Orange Street ArtsFest
10 a.m. – 6 p.m. (Saturday); 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Sunday). Downtown arts festival. Includes exhibitors, art show and sale, demos, food vendors and live entertainment. Free. Second & Orange Street, Wilmington. Info: wilmingtoncommunityarts.org/orange-street-artsfest-2.

5/29 Movie at the Lake
8:45 p.m. Family-friendly outdoor movie screening of *Minions* (2015, PG, 91 min.). Popcorn, soda and candy available for purchase. Admission: Free. Carolina Beach Lake Park, Highway 421 & Atlanta Avenue, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-8434 or www.pleasureislandnc.org.

5/30 Memorial Day Observance
5:45 p.m. Observance held to remember those who gave their lives in service. Features military musical arrangements by an Armed Forces Band, 21-gun salute, and the Executive Director of the Battleship North Carolina, Captain Terry A. Bragg. Free. Battleship NC, 1 Battleship Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-5797 or www.battleshipnc.com.

WEEKLY HAPPENINGS

Monday Sunrise Ocean Flow Yoga
7:30–8:30 a.m. All levels oceanfront yoga practice with Tamara Cairns. Yoga mat provided. Admission: $10. Ocean Front Park, 105 Atlantic Avenue, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8216 or www.townofkurebeach.org.

Monday Farmers' Market
8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Curbside beach market offering a variety of fresh, locally grown produce, baked goods, plants and unique arts and crafts. Opens 5/16. Seawater Lane, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 256-7925 or www.townofwrightsvillebeach.com.

Bring It Downtown

Salt MAGAZINE

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Monday – Wednesday **Cinematique Films**
7 p.m. Independent, classic and foreign films screened in historic Thalian Hall. Check online for updated listings and special screenings. Admission: $7. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info/Tickets: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

Tuesday **Summer Yoga @ Airlie**
8–9 a.m. Start your morning with yoga in the gardens with instructors from Longwave Yoga. All levels welcome. Bring your own mat or towel. Begins 5/17. Admission: $10–15. Airlie Gardens, 300 Airlie Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-7700 or www.airliegardens.org.

Tuesday **Wine Tasting**
6–8 p.m. Free wine tasting hosted by a wine professional plus wine and small plate specials all night. The Fortunate Glass, 29 South Front Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-4292 or www.fortunateglasswinebar.com.

Tuesday **Cape Fear Blues Jam**
8 p.m. A unique gathering of the area's finest Blues musicians. Bring your instrument and join the fun. No cover charge. The Rusty Nail, 1310 South Fifth Avenue. Info: (910) 251-1888 or www.capefearblues.org.

Wednesday **Ogden Farmers' Market**
8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Local farmers, producers and artisans sell fresh fruits, veggies, plants, eggs, cheese, meat, honey, baked goods, wine, bath products and more. Ogden Park, 615 Ogden Park Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-6223 or www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/events-calendar/ogden-farmers-market.

Wednesday **T'ai Chi at CAM**
12:30–1:30 p.m. Qigong (Practicing the Breath of Life) with Martha Gregory. Open to beginner and experienced participants. Admission: $5–8. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

Wednesday **Hoop Dance Jam**
7–9 p.m. Bring your hoop and dance to some great tunes. Every skill level welcome; no experience needed. Admission: $3/class; hoops available for $35. Ocean Front Park, 105 Atlantic Avenue, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8216 or www.townofkurebeach.org.

Wednesday **Wednesday Echo**
7:30–11:30 p.m. Weekly singer/songwriter open mic night that welcomes all genres of music. Each person will have 3–6 songs. Palm Room, 11 East Salisbury Street, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 509-3040.

Wed. & Thurs. **Poplar Grove Farmers' Market**
8 a.m. – 1 p.m. (Wednesday); 3–7 p.m. (Thursday). Open-air market held on the Plantation lawn. Fresh produce, plants, herbs, baked goods and handmade artisan crafts. Poplar Grove Plantation, 10200 Us Highway 17 North, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.poplargrove.org/farmers-market.

Thursday **Yoga at the CAM**
12–1 p.m. Open to beginner and experienced participants. Admission: $5–8. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

Friday & Saturday **Dinner Theatre**
7 p.m. TheatreNOW presents an adaptation of Wiley Cash's *The Kudzu Queen*. TheatreNOW, 19 South Tenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-3now or www.theatrewilmington.com.

Saturday **Riverfront Farmers' Market**
8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Curbside market featuring local farmers, producers, artisans, crafters and live music along the banks of the Cape Fear River. Riverfront Park, North Water Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-6223 or www.wilmingtondowntown.com/events/farmers-market.

Sunday **Bluewater Waterfront Music**
4–7 p.m. Summer concerts on the waterfront patio. Band line-up available online. Bluewater Waterfront Grill, 4 Marina Street, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 256-8500 or www.bluewaterdining.com.

To add a calendar event, please contact ashley@saltmagazinenc.com. Events must be submitted by the first of the month, one month prior to the event.

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Port City People

"An Evening on the Red Carpet"
Presented by Cucalorus
Screen Gems Studios

Sunday, February 28, 2016

Photographs by Bill Ritenour

Elaine & Stephen Lambros, Samantha Shuffer

Patrick Shannahan, Rachel Rice

Amy Hammond, Jess James

Chris & Debby Varner

Ben Coffman, Ashleigh Lineberry

Rachel Flecke, Alexandra Harris

Dianna Newton, Harry Groner

Hillary Meinheit, Donna DeJennaro

Betsy Andronikof, Billy Cone, Beth Crookham

Emily Caulfield, Jessie Williams

Derek Sellers, Nicole Davis

Collette Thomas, Ahmad Nouri

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Port City People

"Take Me to Neverland"
31st Annual Cape Fear Literacy Council Gala

Saturday, March 5, 2016

Photographs by Bill Ritenour

Kara Wright, Brandon Odham

Chris Gore, Yasmin Thompkinson, Gwynn Chambers, Nancy Wooley

Dr. Don Di Giulian, Iris Thomson

Jim & Monica Rolquin

Todd Godbey, Josh & Megan Lambeth

Dr. Jonathan & Elle Woods

Jim & Dru Hoge

Stephen & Celeste Anderson, Amy & Courtney Parker

John & Kathy Black

Steve Coggins, Julie Sanders, Evan Cumalander, Nicole Nelson

James & Cathy Merritt

Paul Dudash, Kelly Stewart

Port City People

Reception for Stephanie Meeks

Presented by Historic Wilmington Foundation

Thursday, March 10, 2016

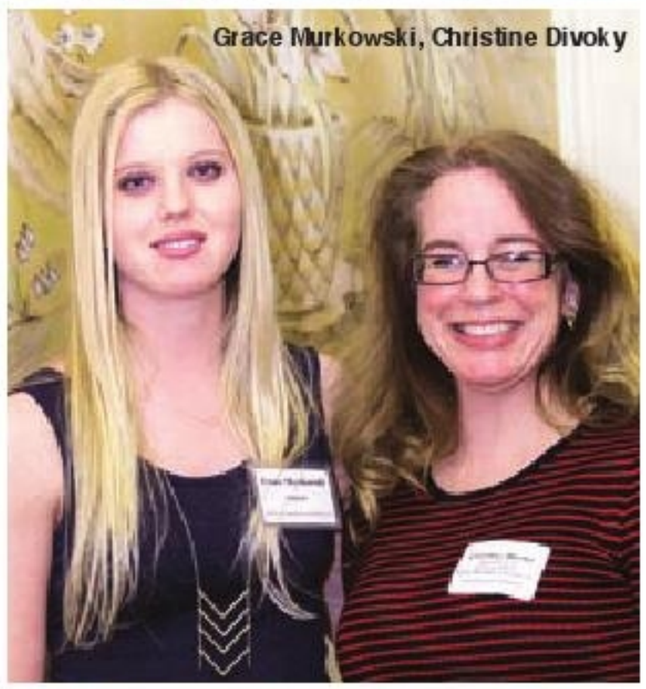
Photographs by Bill Ritenour

Allison & Walker Abney

Robert Erb, Terry Bragg

Judy & TJ Porter Jr., Janet Seapker

Wilbur Jones, Beth Pancoe


Grace Murkowski, Christine Divoky

Elaine Henson, Marjorie Way, Angie Edwards

Rick Lawson, Don Britt, Cleve Callison

Ginni Durham, Phoebe Bragg

Travis Gilbert, M. Gregg Thomas

William & Sarah Holt Gwathmey, Angie Edwards, Rick Lawson

Kent Stephens, Stephanie Meeks, George Edwards

Port City People

Roast on the Coast

Fundraiser for the Junior League of Wilmington

Saturday, March 12, 2016

Photographs by Bill Ritenour

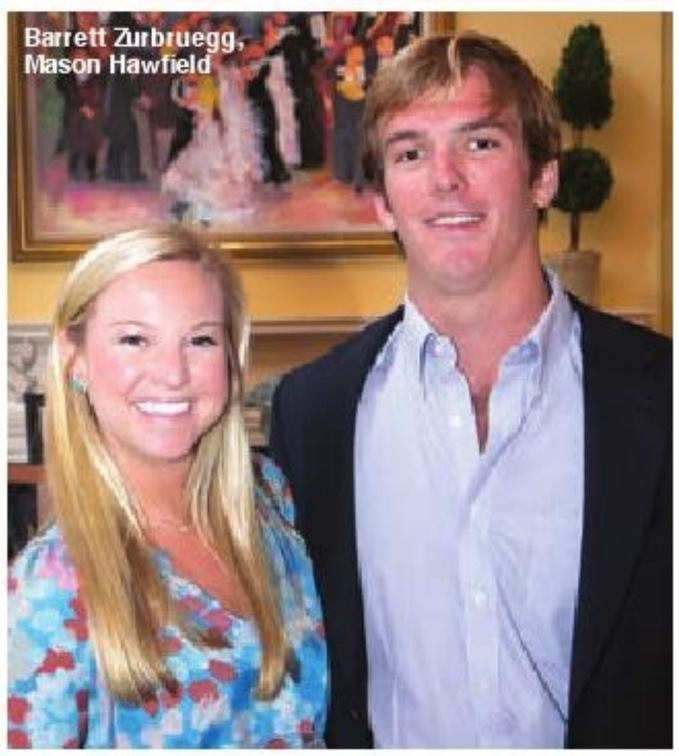
Kelsey & Brennan Hathaway

Will & Amanda Rand, Sarah & Lee Arthur

Drew & Petra Shaeffer

Amanda & Tyler Sipes

Reid Jones, Jennah Fahey, Whitney & Josh Lopez


Barrett Zurbruegg, Mason Hawfield

Ryan Stulz, Anna Adcock, Jen Schweer, Eric Foster, Luke Moser, Whitney Foster, Abby Adcock, Thomas McRae

Devin Warren, Rachel Gainey, Allison Ester

Hunter Crumpton, Daniel Allen, Katie Brice

Meghan Donovan, Christina Hawkins, Vanessa Hansen

Angie & Lentz Brewer

The Merry Month of Mayhem

Whatever you do, don't buy a broom

By Astrid Stellanova

May is beautiful, sure, but tricky if you happen to have a belief system like my kinfolk. According to my elders and their age-old list of Strange Warnings and Superstitions, you should never marry in May ("marry in May, rue the day") or wash a blanket. Or buy a broom. But on the bright side, we have never had a U.S. president pass over to the Other Side during the merry month of May. Ad Astra. — Astrid

Taurus (April 20–May 20)
It doesn't take Astrid to know you are stubborn, Sugar. But it takes me to call you out. Maybe it's time to take the high road, if only for a change of scenery. There are several good reasons to revel in the fact that nobody has sued you lately; maybe they were too broke to hire a lawyer. But let's say maybe it's because they care more about you than you cared about them. You bent the rules. Use your energy to further something powerful and positive (that can come to fruition if you re-channel your thoughts). You have incredible talents; maybe you can back down just a tee-nine-sy bit and abandon your plan to make your victim's life hellish.

Gemini (May 21–June 20)
You remind me of the prisoner who thinks he's the warden. You are locked up in some ideas about the past that have nothing to do with the present, and those ideas have the power to sabotage your current serenity. You have been a slave to righteous anger that landed you in a box. If you are willing to relinquish it, you unlock the door of the prison cell.

Cancer (June 21–July 22)
There's less to your new love than meets the eye, Honey. If you were willing to explore with a little more vigor, you would uncover some truths that aren't buried that deep. Be like a dog with a Milk Bone — persist in getting what you are due and beg your friends to help save you from yourself. Don't allow yourself to be distracted.

Leo (July 23–August 22)
Somebody really stirred your grits — they took the spoon right out of your hand when you were standing at the stove. Don't retaliate. Wait. They are going to get their comeuppance. No action required. Smile sweetly and just step back from that hot burner and let karma do its work.

Virgo (August 23–September 22)
You have a piece of the truth, and while it is not exactly true, it is truthy. What you believe, and what is objectively so, ain't exactly the same, Honey. You have a golden opportunity for an adventurous getaway this month, and use this time to forget all about something that is making you stir crazy. Put your talents first. Nothing else matters.

Libra (September 23–October 22)
Your new love has just the right amount of wrong to keep you hooked. Let cute little what's-his-name or what's-her-name do the work for a change and get your booty onto the dance floor. Maybe it takes this to keep you from reverting to your serious side too long. Let the sweet child in you out to play; don't over-think it. Shake it, Honey Child.

Scorpio (October 23–November 21)
You don't have to know how to calculate the square of a hypotenuse to be worthwhile. This is a significant time to rethink your painful self-doubts and kick them right onto the curb. A love of drama keeps you diverted from your soul's journey. Look away, Sugar.

Sagittarius (November 22–December 21)
There is a toxic someone in your life who stinks like cheap deodorant. This relationship in your inner circle is about as needed as a stick in the eye. They serve you well as a bad example, though. Be the Star Child you were born to be and just shine more brightly whenever they start to throw water on your good spirits.

Capricorn (December 22–January 19)
Exoneration is not the cure and neither is revenge. A healthy distance will give you the psychic space and peace you seek. Someone you confide in can gently guide you back to your best self. The people that truly matter already believe you, so don't worry another minute about something that has pained you overlong.

Aquarius (January 20–February 18)
You honestly tried your best, but you burned the bread. It happens. But what is most appetizing about sitting at the table with you is that in your sweet company, a can of beans and a spoon is a treat. It's a good time to be you, even when you have to scrape the burned bits off the toast. And it's good to be loved by you.

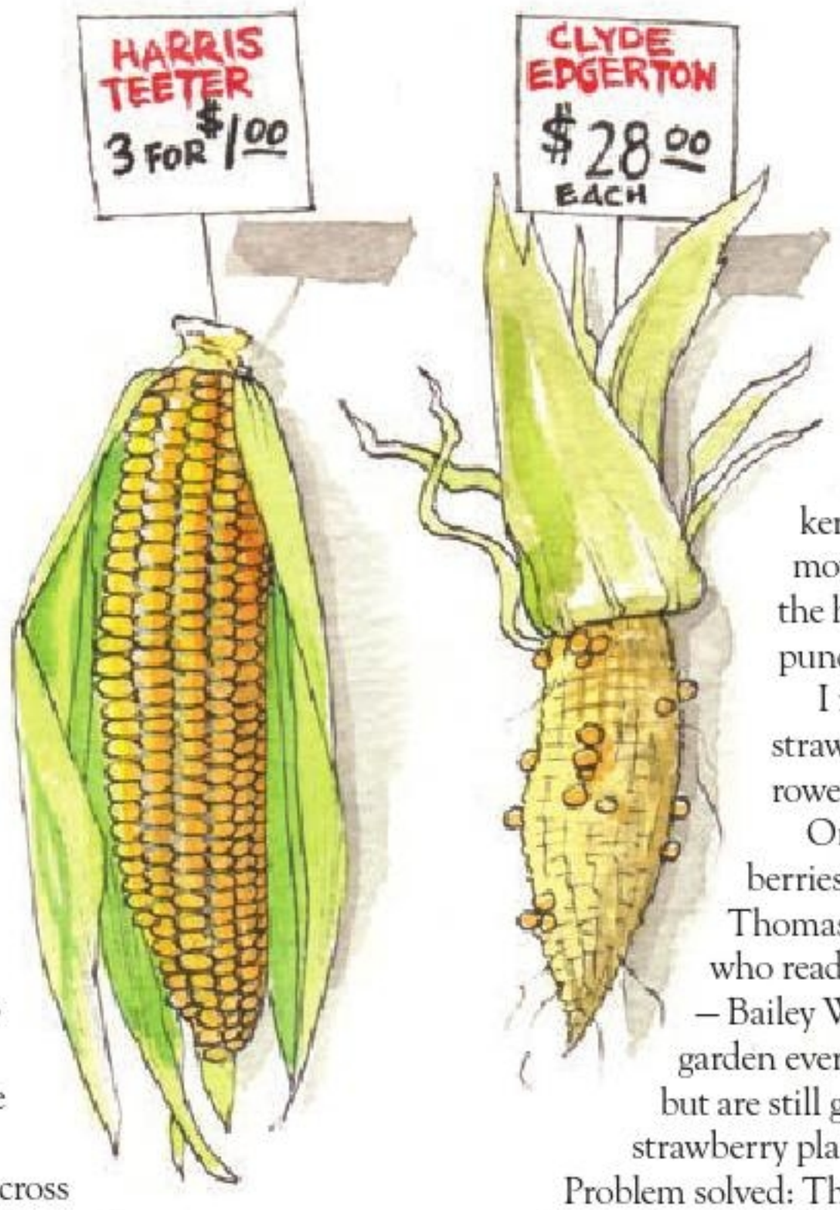
Pisces (February 19–March 20)
It scares you to feel this happy, doesn't it, Love? Well, let yourself go. Twist and shout and holler out loud if you feel like it. Your mojo came back, and you are going to tear it up on the dance floor of life!

Aries (March 21–April 19)
Chase after something you have been dreaming about like the sweet maniac you really are. You want it, you deserve it, and you can have it if you go flat out. There is big magic in self-belief. Child, it is fun to watch you from a distance: This is just what a dream pursued looks like.

For years, Astrid Stellanova owned and operated Curl Up and Dye Beauty Salon in the boondocks of North Carolina until arthritic fingers and her popular astrological readings provoked a new career path.

Memories You Can Taste

Remembering the garden foods of boyhood



By Clyde Edgerton

Speaking of *Salt* magazine's theme for this month . . .

I can talk about my gardening experiences. Like cutting grass (maybe a bit of a stretch for "gardening") when I was 14: Shirtless, I walk backward into a lawn hedge and am blanketed with fourteen sudden wasp stings on my back within about five seconds. (I remember those numbers.)

That was not funny then, not funny now — to me, anyway.

Funny is remembering the neighbor who came driving up in her car a while later. She lived, oh, I don't know, maybe a half-mile to a mile from us, across some fields. She sticks her head out of the car window and says, "What happened? I heard somebody screaming up here — all the way from my house."

Then, maybe twenty years ago, I decided to grow some tomato plants in my backyard. I planted two; I strolled out to water them every morning. I remember the dew on the vines, the freshness of a new day, my feelings of accomplishment.

At about the start of the second week, I noticed that a leaf was looking a little yellow. Something didn't seem right. Both plants were looking weak. So I put some fertilizer on and around them. They looked no better the next day, so I added more fertilizer. This went on day after day. Surely the fertilizer would get them up and running!

If you're a person who picks up and reads the *Home and Garden* issue of *Salt*, no further explanation is necessary.

Even more recently, ten years ago perhaps, I decided to grow a patch of corn in the backyard. At this moment, as I write, while remembering that planting, I have a sudden deeper memory, one taking me back to my childhood, before the age of 6 (my age when my mother, father and I moved away from the house with the large garden plot out back). In those early days of childhood, my father would allow me to help him plant our large garden in the spring, and I distinctly remember bending over a row of freshly plowed earth, a paper sack of corn kernels in one hand, and in the other hand three individual kernels.

My father would stick the top end of a hoe in the garden row, making a hole twice or three times the size of your big toe. I would drop in the three kernels, pull three more kernels from the sack, and move on down the row. He would cover the kernels with the hoe end of the hoe, then he'd catch up with me and punch a new hole in the row. And on and on.

I remember my grandfather's garden. He specialized in strawberries, and he plowed with a mule. My father borrowed the mule to plow our garden.

One trick my grandfather didn't know about strawberries is practiced by my friend June White, who lives in Thomasville, Georgia. Some of you know her as the woman who reads a Thanksgiving story on NPR every Thanksgiving — Bailey White is her radio and author name. She has a big garden every year, and when the strawberries start coming in but are still green, she spreads small red painted rocks among the strawberry plants. And then . . . you guessed it: The birds come. Problem solved: The birds stop coming.

One of the most spiritual aspects of gardening, of course, is sitting at the table with a tall glass of iced tea, eating fresh vegetables: string beans, corn — on or off the cob, with butter and salt — mashed potatoes not quite mashed all the way so little bits of unmashed pieces are left, butter beans, especially if they are young, cucumber — perhaps in a little white vinegar — black-eyed peas, and very slightly bitter turnip salat. (I once had "turnip salat" written in a novel manuscript. A New York editor wrote: "You have misspelled 'salad.' I replied that I hadn't. She said, "Well, what word were you trying to spell?" I said, "Salat."

I can't separate those foods from my childhood, and those foods allow a memory that is precious, a collective memory of rural people in the South. All of us. (If you grew up elsewhere, you perhaps have it for yourself and your culture/community/place.) A group of writers and others are remembering all this, and they show how this connection between food and culture is important. They are called the Southern Foodways Alliance (southernfoodways.org). Check them out if you experienced a little nostalgia about the food of your youth — regardless of whether or not yours resembled mine. And besides all that, here you are in the South for some reason.

Oh, and that patch of corn I planted about ten years ago? Too much shade — shouldn't have been any shade, of course. I averaged about nine kernels per ear. Three ears per stalk. Total: about 270 kernels of corn for the season.

Clyde Edgerton is the author of ten novels, a memoir and a new work, Papadaddy's Book for New Fathers. *He is the Thomas S. Kenan III Distinguished Professor of Creative Writing at UNCW.*

ILLUSTRATION BY HARRY BLAIR

Figure 8 Island: Private Beaches with Pristine Waters

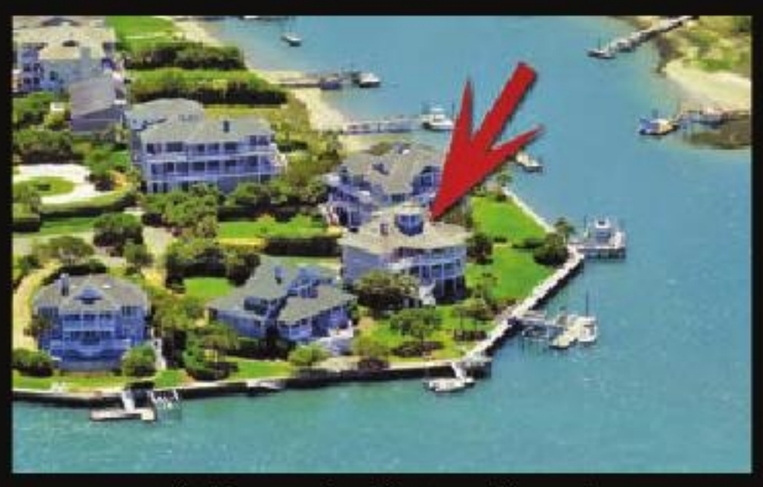


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Figure 8 Island | Soundfront | $1,950 ,000

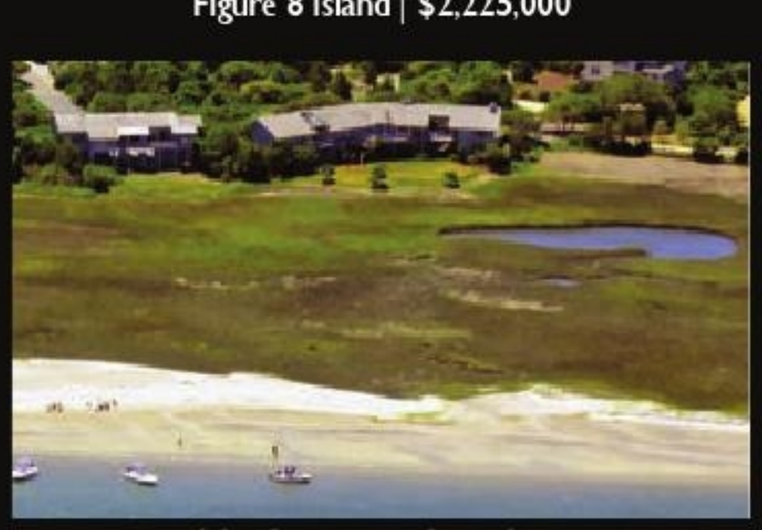
1 Banks Road
Figure 8 Island | Soundfront | $4,250,000

102 Beach Road South
Figure 8 Island | Oceanfront | $2,375,000

88 Beach Road South
Figure 8 Island | $2,225,000

146 Beach Road South
Figure 8 Island | Oceanfront | $2,495,000

168 Beach Road South
Figure 8 Island | Oceanfront | $2,299,000



13 Oyster Catcher
Figure 8 Island | Soundfront | $2,300,000

502 N. Channel Harbor Island
Wrightsville Beach | Sound with dock | $1,995,000

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